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GAMEFAN

NEXT GENERATION VIDEO GAME MAGAZINE

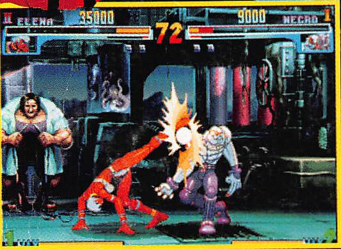
VOLUME 5 ISSUE 3
MARCH 1997

DOOM 64!



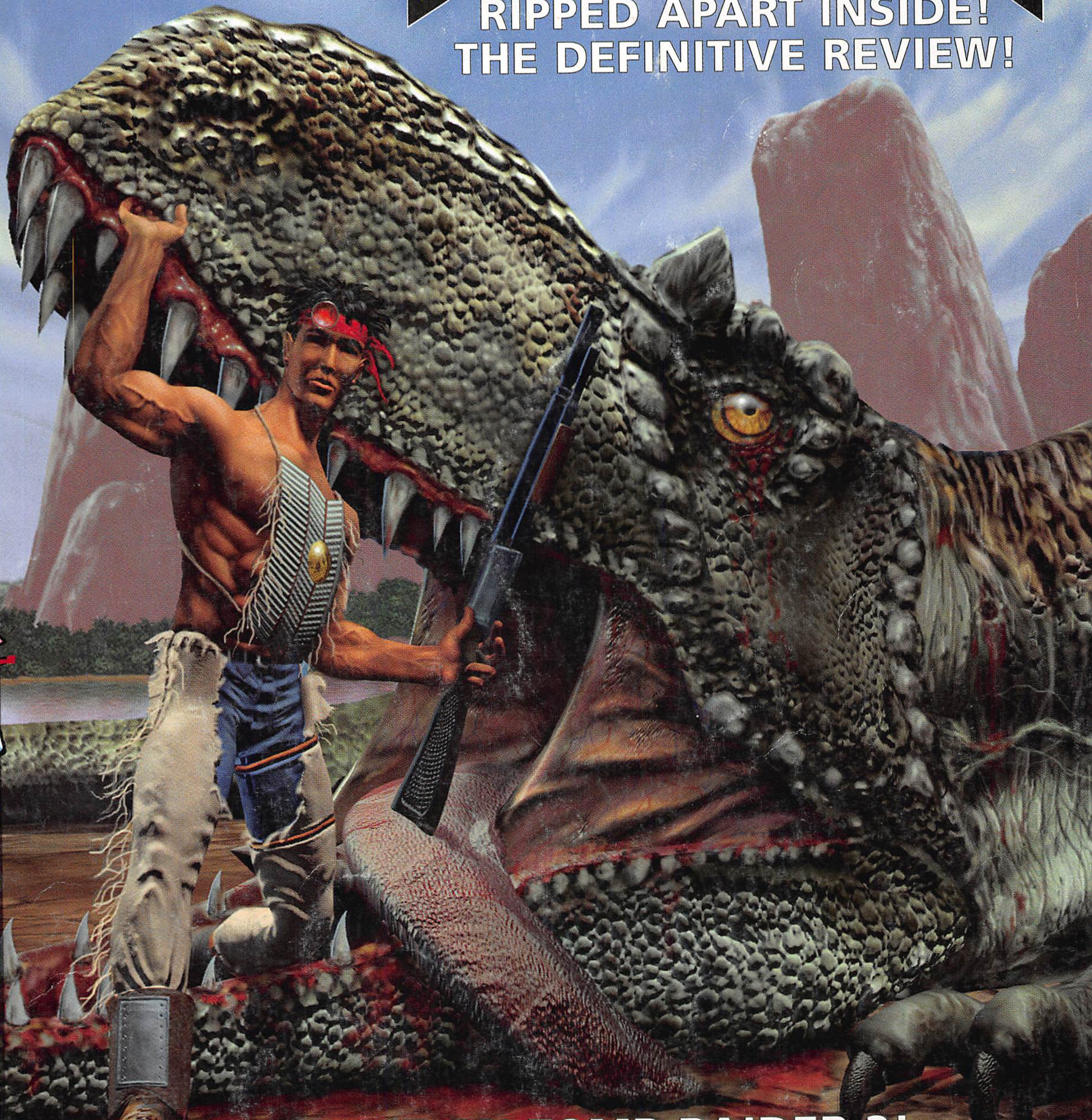
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ENKA
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THE HOLY ARK
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EKKEN 3





TUROK

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This past month has been an eventful one. In one fell swoop, next generation supremacy was won by SCEA in Japan. What the signing of Square began, the signing of Enix completed. With the *Final Fantasy* and *Dragon Quest* franchises under their belts, Sony literally has sealed the victory in Japan. In the days preceding the official announcement (12/23-1/5) the Sony PlayStation which has been available in Japan for well over a year sold 269, 389 units to Nintendo's 105,315 and Sega's 98,813. Sony now controls 52% of the import market to Sega's 16.6, and Nintendo's 8.7. To date SCEA has over 1.1 million prebooks for *Final Fantasy VII*, which at the time of this writing (1/20) is only 10 days away.

Whether this merging of Japan's finest RPG makers will have a similar impact here in the States remains to be seen. There are vast differences in the two markets. The US game scene is viewed by many as a hobby, while in Japan, and the UK for that matter, where there is far less recreation, gaming takes on the proportions of our Major League Sports or major motion pictures. We line up for *Jerry Maguire*, they line up for *Final Fantasy*. The difference is more evident than ever as you watch Mr. Gadget or so many Network Entertainment Editors stumble through a video game segment. "This machine has 64 bits, twice as many as the competition." It's hilarious. In Japan they have network shows hosted by game experts, similar to our *Entertainment Tonight*, and game music is a major industry. And it doesn't stop there. Resin kits, action figures, and other merchandise based on major video game characters are as available as *Spawn* toys here.

In Japan, the Nintendo 64 was met with broad skepticism. Only a handful of developers are currently developing games, many of which enjoy little brand recognition. The decision to adhere to the cartridge format played a vital role in Square's and Enix's departure and 3rd-party apprehension. Here in the States, however, the Nintendo 64, which launched with only a handful of games, enjoyed record sales and more mainstream press than Sony and Sega combined. In the past, however, Nintendo's success Stateside was due in no small part to massive support overseas—support Sony now controls. Nintendo, however, as if they saw the entire scenario unfolding, has begun signing a new group of Super Developers. Rare, Paradigm, and the magical Shigeru Miyamoto continue to produce Nintendo games regarded as events on the American game scene. 3rd party support Stateside also seems to be on the rise. But who will make the RPGs? This is the burning question. RPGs are on the rise in the US, thanks to Sony and Konami. *Suikoden* rose to the number one spot at EB upon its debut and garnished the number two spot the following week. Currently, Sony has Square's *Saga Frontier*, and *FFVII*, their own *Wild Arms*, and Konami's *Vandal Hearts* in the pipeline. RPG heaven!

But can RPG supremacy control the US market as it has Japan's? One look at *FFVII* actually makes me believe it just might. In the end however, I think diversity is probably the key. Offer enough of everything and the core gamer is yours. The hardcore fans have been waiting long for this chain of events, and I still believe if you win their trust, the masses will follow.

Whether the US game scene will become as mainstream as Japan's remains to be seen, but it seems more likely than ever as we enjoy the most diverse market across the boards perhaps ever. Sony's emergence has played a major role in Japan and I can't imagine they'd stop there. Could this be the move that enthusiast gamers have been waiting years for? It would seem so. The months ahead will, I'm sure, tell the tale.

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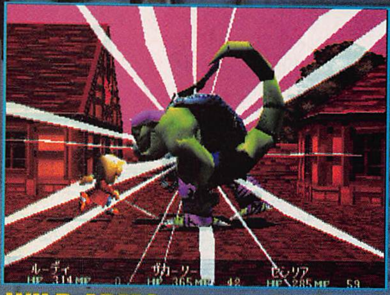
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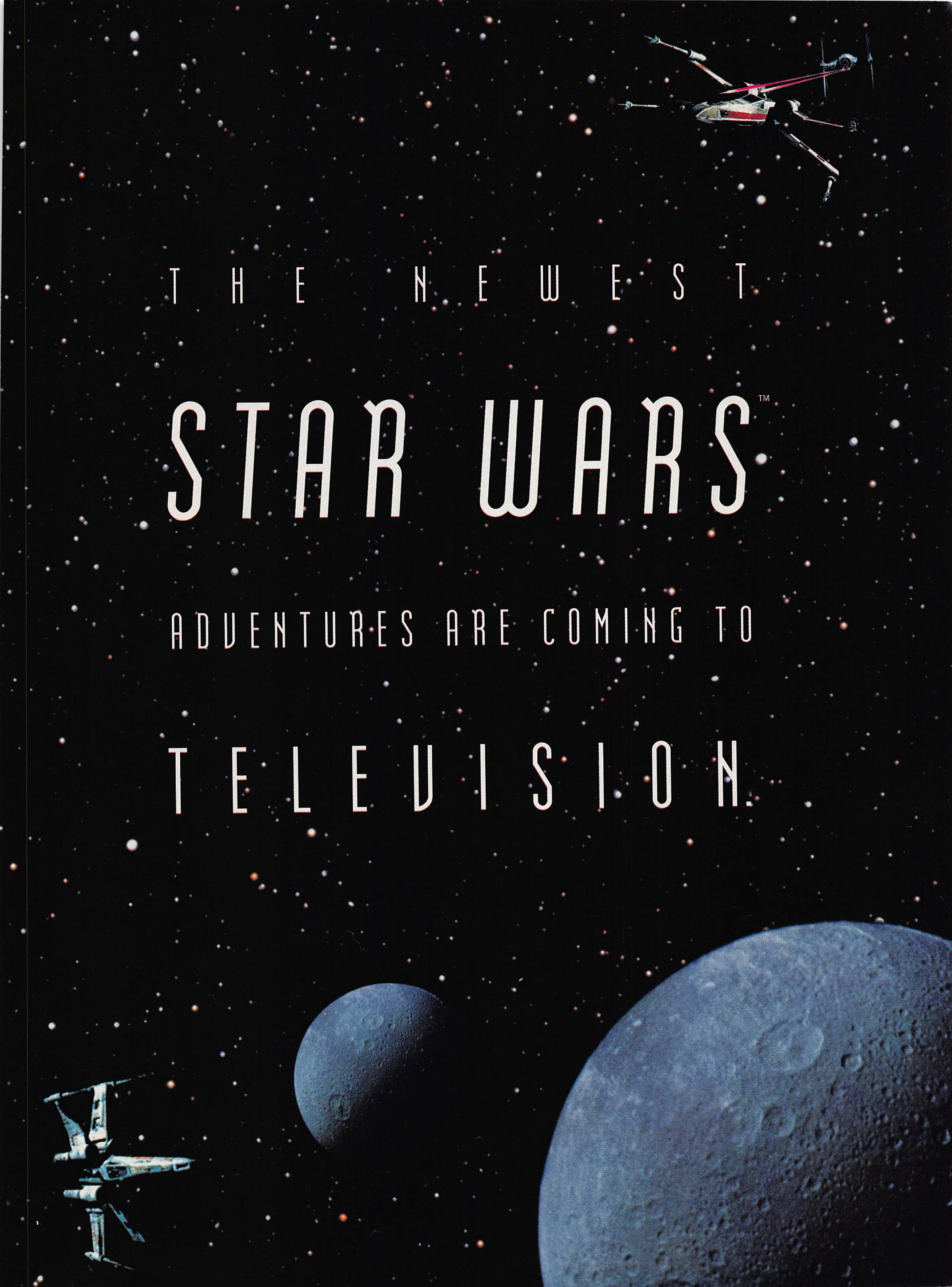


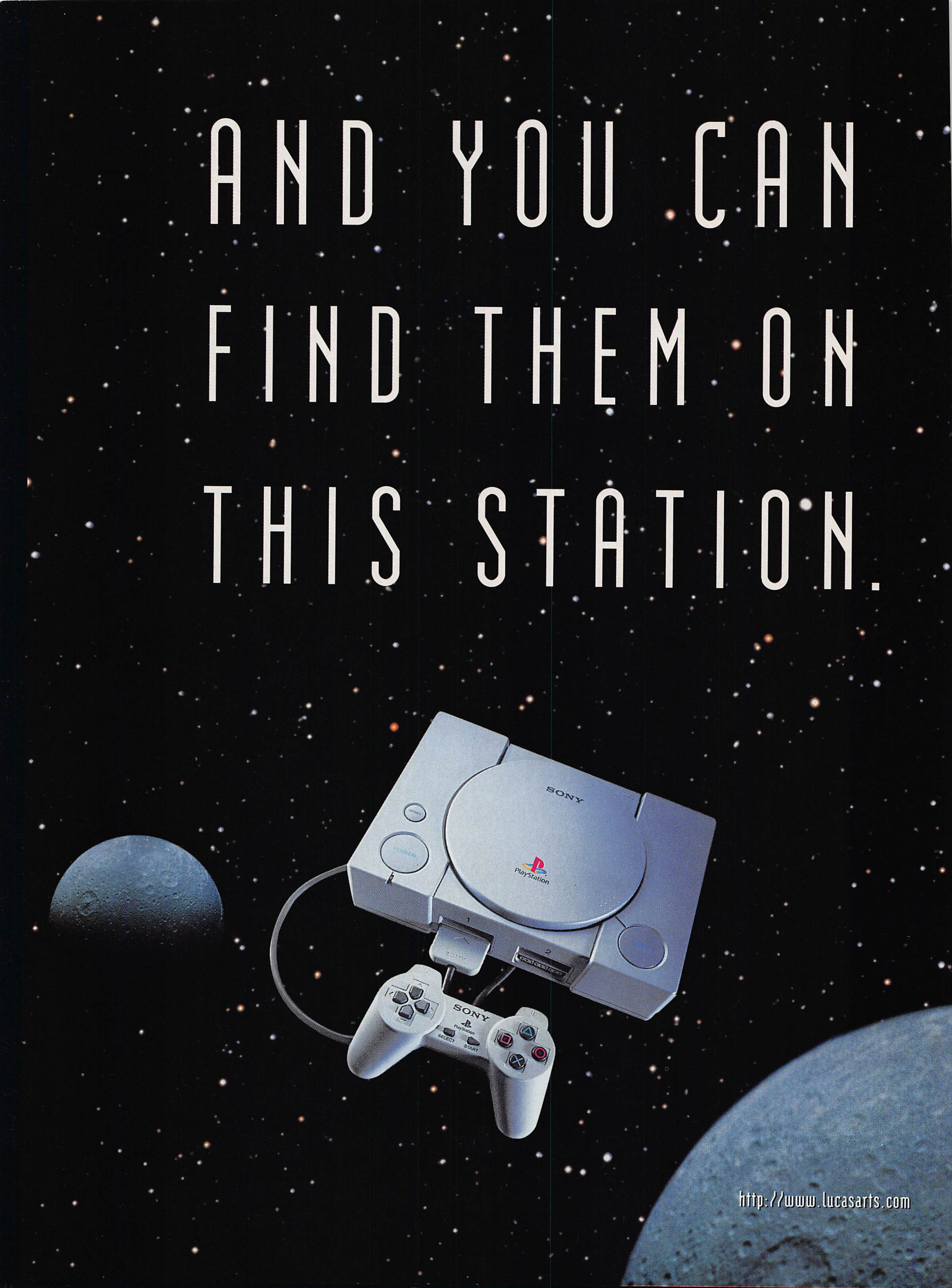
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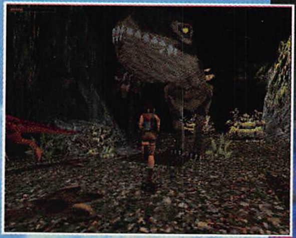
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TOP TEN MOST WANTED

READERS' TOP TEN

1. *Tomb Raider* - PS/Saturn/PC
2. *Mario 64* - Nintendo 64
3. *WaveRace* - Nintendo 64
4. *Resident Evil* - PS
5. *Tekken 2* - PS
6. *NiGHTS* - Saturn
7. *Crash Bandicoot* - PS
8. *Suikoden* - PS
9. *Star Wars* - Nintendo 64
10. *Street Fighter Alpha 2* - PS/Saturn



READERS' MOST WANTED

1. *Resident Evil 2* - PS
2. *Final Fantasy VII* - PS
3. *Turok* - Nintendo 64
4. *StarFox 64* - Nintendo 64
5. *Street Fighter III* - Arcade
6. *Doom 64* - Nintendo 64
7. *MDK* - PS
8. *Yoshi's Island* - Nintendo 64
9. *Virtua Fighter 3* - Saturn
10. *Tekken 3* - PS



GF EDITORS' TOP TEN



1. *Final Fantasy VII* - PS
2. *Turok: Dinosaur Hunter* - N64
3. *Shining the Holy Ark* - Saturn
4. *Doom 64* - N64
5. *Wild Arms* - PS
6. *MegaMan 8* - PS
7. *Toshinden 3* - Saturn
8. *Mario Kart 64* - N64
9. *Tale of the Sun* - PS
10. *Castlevania: Bloodlines* - Genesis



1. *CoolBoarders* - PS
2. *Turok: Dinosaur Hunter* - N64
3. *Jet Moto* - PS
4. *Soul Blade* - PS
5. *Doom 64* - N64
6. *VMX Racing* - PS
7. *Super Mario 64* - N64
8. *Black Dawn* - PS
9. *Tale of the Sun* - PS
10. *Choro Q* - PS (import)



1. *Soul Blade* - PS
2. *Wipeout XL* - PS
3. *WaveRace 64* - N64
4. *Turok* - N64
5. *Rage Racer* - PS
6. *Baku Baku* - Saturn
7. *Formula 1* - PS
8. *Virtual On* - Saturn
9. *Amok* - Saturn
10. *Daytona CCE* - Saturn



1. *Turok: Dinosaur Hunter* - N64
2. *Fighters Megamix* - Saturn
3. *PowerSlave* - PS
4. *Doom 64* - N64
5. *Mario Kart 64* - N64
6. *Tenka* - PS
7. *Hexen* - Saturn
8. *Broken Helix* - PS
9. *Street Fighter Alpha 2* - Arcade
10. *Strider* - Genesis



1. *Turok: Dinosaur Hunter* - N64
2. *Doom 64* - N64
3. *Tekken 3* - Arcade
4. *Tale of the Sun* - PS
5. *Parappa the Rapper* - PS
6. *Rage Racer* - Arcade
7. *Soul Blade* - PS
8. *Tekken 2* - PS
9. *Tokyo Wars* - Arcade
10. *3D Monster Maze* - ZX81



1. *Fighters Megamix* - Saturn
2. *Vandal Hearts* - PS
3. *Suikoden* - PS
4. *Norse by Norsewest* - PS
5. *Shining the Holy Ark* - Saturn
6. *Ray Earth* - Saturn
7. *Mega Turrican* - Genesis
8. *Broken Helix* - PS
9. *Tempest X* - PS
10. *Contra Hard Corps* - Genesis

SPECIAL UK GUEST EDITOR'S TOP TEN

This Month's Guest:

PAUL DAVIES
Editor-in-Chief, *Computer & Video Games* Magazine

1. *Dragon Quest 3* - Super NES
2. *Mario Kart 64* - N64
3. *Fighters Megamix* - Saturn
4. *Turok: Dinosaur Hunter* - N64
5. *Virtua Fighter 3* - Arcade
6. *Shadows of the Empire* - N64
7. *Soul Blade* - PS
8. *Rage Racer* - PS
9. *Parappa the Rapper* - PS
10. *Wild Arms* - PS

WIN THE GAME SYSTEM OF YOUR CHOICE! ENTER TODAY!

All you have to do to enter the drawing is write down a list of your top 10 favorite games and the 10 games you want the most that aren't out yet, on a piece of paper or a postcard then send them to: GAMEFAN TOP TEN, 5137 Clareton Dr., Suite 210 Agoura Hills, CA 91301

First Prize:
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Second Prize:
Your choice of one of the Picks of the Month in Viewpoint.

Third Prize:
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Drawing is limited to One (1) entry per person per month. Drawings will be held on the 21st of each month. The three (3) winners will be notified by mail and listed on this page. For a complete list of rules and regulations write: GameFan Top Ten with self addressed & stamped envelope.

Congratulations

to last month's winners:

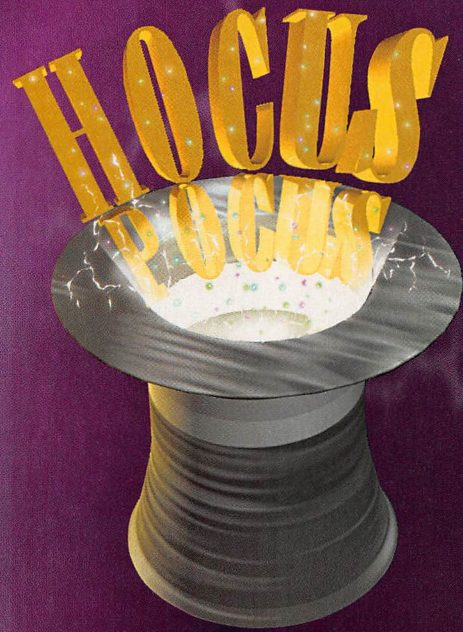
First Prize:
David Valliant, Glen Park, IN

Second Prize:
Joe Plitner, Worchester, MA

Third Prize:
Shane McIntire, Susanville, CA


[DIAGNOSIS › MIND BLOCK]
PUZZLE FIGHTER II TURBO
SYMPTOMS :
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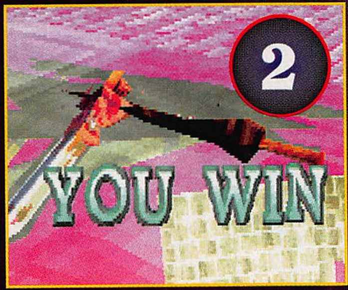
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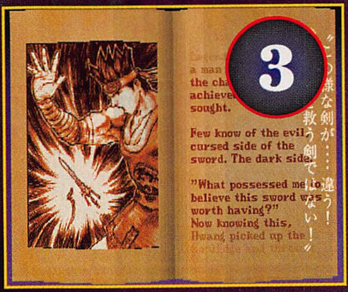
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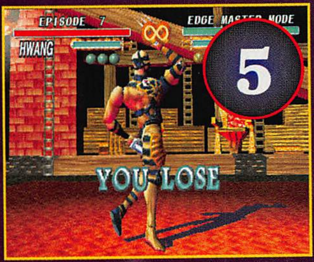








OBTAINING THE FINAL EDGE MASTER MODE WEAPON: When playing in EDGE MASTER MODE, work your way to the last episode and beat Cervantes and Soul Edge. After your character's ending, you will return to the map again searching for the "Ultimate Weapon." Now all you have to do is save the game when you return, move to the episode before your final battle, and lose on purpose. Then travel to the episode before that (usually 7 or 6), and win. After defeating that opponent, you will hear the spot effect and have the "Ultimate Weapon!" Your character's weapon power is unmatched!!







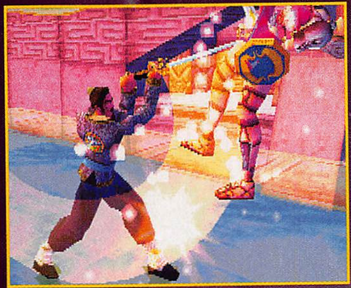
PLAY AS SOUL EDGE!!
Beat the game in Arcade mode with every character, and you will receive this nifty title screen! But guess what..? You will have SOUL EDGE as a playable character! You know what's even better? He has an ending in the game as well!













HIDDEN CHARACTERS!! - Simply beat EDGE MASTER MODE with the corresponding characters; Siegfried, Hwang, or Sophitia. Make sure you obtain their "Ultimate Weapon." Go back to Arcade Mode and move the cursor past Hwang or Cervantes. Although the new characters aren't any different from their counterparts, there are a whopping 15 characters in the whole game to play from! No new endings, though. Darn.









MITSURUGI'S ENDING - Yes, you can actually play Mitsurugi's ending! Just move him left or right to dodge the bullets, and forward to advance. Then tap the SQUARE or TRIANGLE to finish Tanegashima!
MULTIPLE ENDINGS! - All of the characters (excluding Soul Edge) have multiple endings! When their ending starts, tap all on all the buttons and move the D-pad like a madman. Their 'other' ending will commence, and you can see what happens to your favorite character... twice! Just one more thing... Voldo is indeed a freak!



SUIKODEN SONY PLAYSTATION INFINITE MONEY TRICK!



SEQUENCE
L = LEFT
M = MIDDLE
R = RIGHT
M, L, R, M, R, L, R, M, M, M, L, R, L, M, R, L, R, M, R, R, R, R, R, R, L, M, R, L, R, L, L, M, L, R, R, L, M, R, R, L, R, L, M, R, R, M, M, R, M, R.

Locate Marco when you first reach Rockland. Talk to her and play the game. Then use the sequence above to rake in the money! (Note: This sequence works about 99% of the time, so if she breaks the sequence, just quit and start again!)

John Moyer
Brandon, Florida

SEXY PARODIUS SONY PLAYSTATION (IMPORT) POWER-UP CODE!

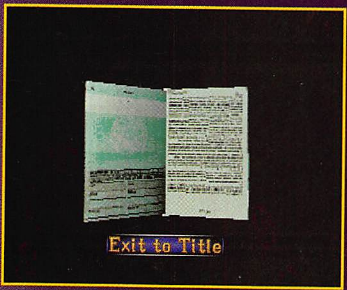




POWER-UP - Pause the game and enter: UP, UP, DOWN, DOWN, L1, R1, L1, R1, X, and CIRCLE.
POWER DOWN - To lose all power-ups, pause the game and enter: UP, UP, DOWN, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT, LEFT, RIGHT, X, and CIRCLE. ("Oh my god!")

Unknown Entity
chaotic__order@ibm.net

TOMB RAIDER SEGA SATURN LEVEL SELECT!

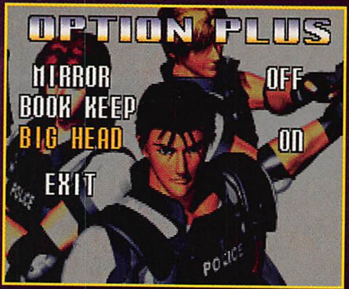




LEVEL SELECT - At any time during the game bring up the PASSPORT SCREEN. Flip to the last page that says: "Exit to Title." Then press Z, Y, Z, Y, X, X, X, then press START. You then should hear Lara make a sound. Press the "C" button to exit.

Simon Yang
Lindenhurst, N.Y.

VIRTUA COP 2 SEGA SATURN BIG HEAD MODE!





BIG HEAD - Beat the game (or just go to the third OPTION SCREEN if you have it). Go to BOOK KEEP and see total games played. The start a game and RESET (A+B+C+START). Once your total number of games is 58, you should be able to turn "BIG HEAD" mode on!

Thad Phillips
Athens, Georgia

WAYNE GRETZKY 64 NINTENDO 64 CODES GALORE!







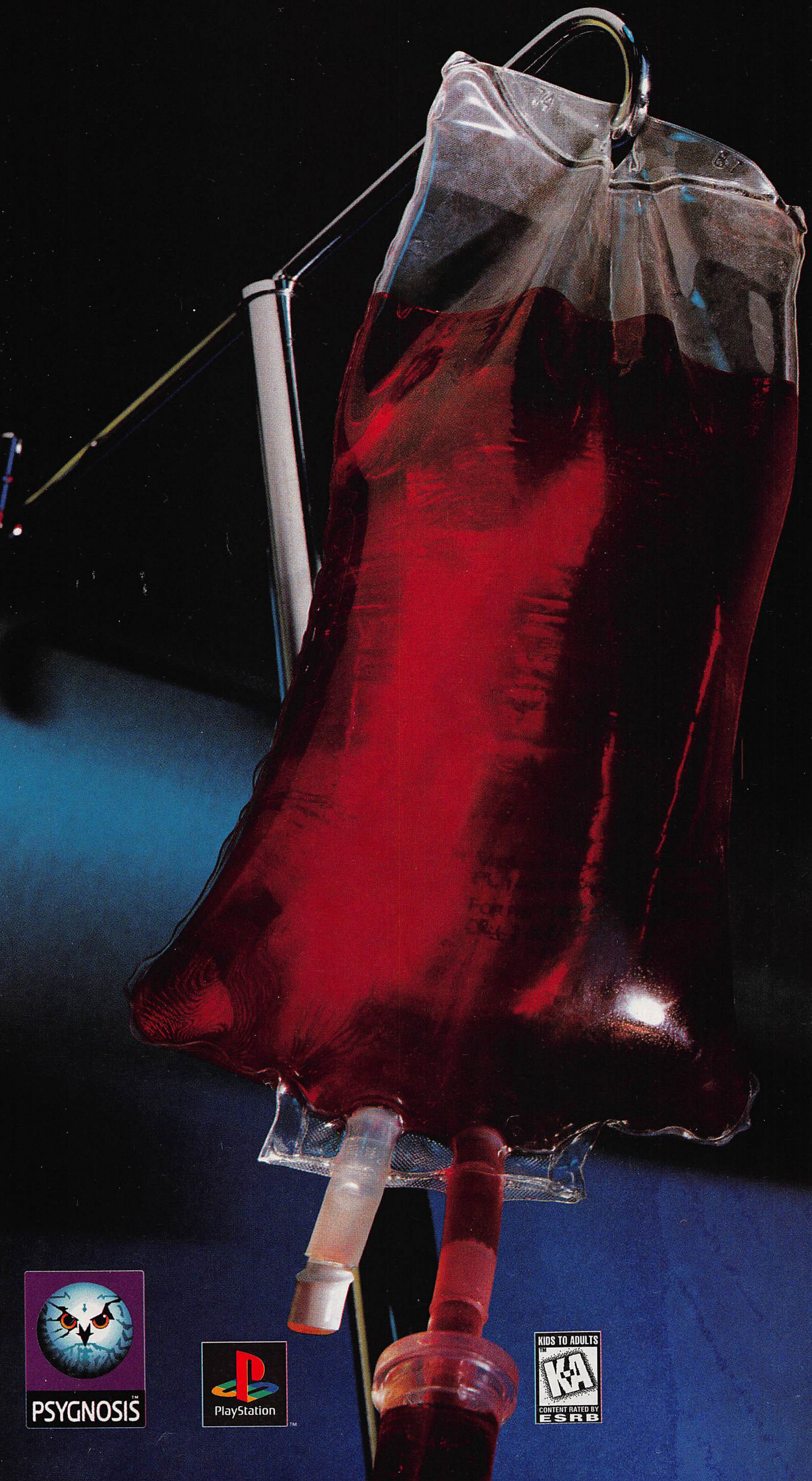


HERE ARE SOME CODES FOR WAYNE GRETZKY 64! HAVE FUN!

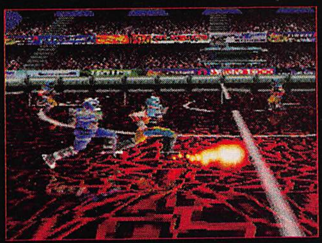
LOGO VIEW - Press the Trigger Button at the many attract screens to view logos.
INSTANT GRETZKY START - Hold a button when pressing START on START SCREEN.
HEAD SCALE (FROM OPTION SCREEN) - Press bottom "C" button and "R".
BODY SCALE (FROM OPTION SCREEN) - Press left "C" button and "R".
Y SCALE (FROM OPTION SCREEN) - Press top "C" button and "R".

CREATE TEAMS (FROM OPTIONS SCREEN) - L + BOTTOM C BUTTON, BOTTOM C BUTTON, TOP C BUTTON, TOP C BUTTON, BOTTOM C BUTTON, BOTTOM C BUTTON, RIGHT C BUTTON, RIGHT C BUTTON, BOTTOM C BUTTON, TOP C BUTTON, TOP C BUTTON, TOP C BUTTON, TOP C BUTTON, TOP C BUTTON, TOP C BUTTON, TOP C BUTTON, TOP C BUTTON, TOP C BUTTON, TOP C BUTTON. (From View Stats screen.)
SUPER TEAMS (FROM OPTIONS SCREEN) - L + RIGHT C BUTTON, LEFT C BUTTON, LEFT C BUTTON, RIGHT C BUTTON, LEFT C BUTTON, LEFT C BUTTON, RIGHT C BUTTON, LEFT C BUTTON, LEFT C BUTTON.
SELECT OPPOSING TEAM (FROM SELECT TEAM SCREEN) - RIGHT C BUTTON, RIGHT C BUTTON, RIGHT C BUTTON.

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NBA JAM EXTREME — SONY PLAYSTATION — HIDDEN TEAMS!





HIDDEN TEAMS - Input the following at the initials screen.

SCULPTURED - YME, MAY 17.

MORE TEAMS - ICE, APRIL 27.

John Hess
johnhess@pe.net

VIRTUAL ON — SEGA SATURN — NEW COLOR, HIDDEN CHARACTERS, SUPER MOVE!







Alex Q
Belmont, MA

SECOND COLORS - Tap LEFT SHIFT when selecting Arcade, VS, etc.
CROUCH ATTACK - LEFT or RIGHT or DOWN + L + R + A + C or Y.
SPECIAL ATTACK (For Viper 2 & Temjin) - While weapon gauge is full:
VIPER 2: While jumping, UP, UP, Y, Y.
TEMJIN: While jumping, UP, UP, Y, Y.
DORKA'S SPINNING HAMMER - RIGHT SHIFT + Y.
JAGUARANDI - To get Jaguarandi as a selectable character, beat the game on HARD. At the character select screen, press right after RAIDEN, and he will be selectable.
YELLOW/WHITE TEMJIN & RAIDEN - Press UP + RIGHT SHIFT and LEFT SHIFT at the START SCREEN. If done correctly, you will hear a sound confirming it.

KI GOLD — NINTENDO 64 — MACHINE GARGOS?







GARGOS - During any character's stat screen (above), press Z, B, A, Z, A, L. Then at the same screen again input the GARGOS CODE: Z, A, R, Z, A, B. Now choose the SHADOW GARGOS when selecting the color. Could GARGOS be another one of Ultratech's creations? You be the judge!

Robert Daily
Henderson, TX

KI GOLD — NINTENDO 64 — MORE KI CODES!

PERMANENT OPTIONS - This code is PERMANENT, even after you turn your system off! At the character stat screen, (see above) input: Z, B, A, Z, A, L or Z, B, A, L, A, Z.
END CREDITS - Z, L, A, Z, A, R
LEVEL 1 OPTIONS - (Throw damage, easy breakers, invisible tag, and aerial view.)
LEVEL 2 OPTIONS - (Full super bar, full breakers, and powered finishes.)
LEVEL 3 OPTIONS - (Missiles, fast fireballs, and auto doubles.)
LEVEL 4 OPTIONS - (Early ultimates, knockdowns, quick openers, and cheap juggles.)
LEVEL 5 OPTIONS - (Blocking)

STAGE CODES
ORCHID - Hold UP and press FK.
GLACIUS - Hold UP and press FP.
MAYA - Hold UP and press MP.
SABREWULF - Hold UP and press QP.
TJ COMBO - Hold DOWN and press FP.
FULGORE - Hold UP and press MK.
KIM WU - Hold DOWN and press QK.
TUSK - Hold UP and press QK.
JAGO - Hold DOWN and press QP.
GARGOS - Hold DOWN and press MP.

MUSIC CODES
ORCHID - Hold UP and press FK.
GLACIUS - Hold UP and press FP.
MAYA - Hold UP and press MP.
SABREWULF - Hold UP and press QP.
TJ COMBO - Hold DOWN and press FP.
FULGORE - Hold UP and press MK.
KIM WU - Hold DOWN and press QK.
TUSK - Hold DOWN and press QK.
JAGO - Hold DOWN and press QP.
GARGOS - Hold DOWN and press MP.

SECRET SKY CODE - Hold DOWN on both controllers with MK at the same time.
SPINAL'S STAGE AND MUSIC - First player Hold DOWN and press MK. Second player just select character.

Zach Deusler
Middletown, WI



ASCII ENTERTAINMENT

KING'S FIELD II™

What it takes to make an epic RPG/Adventure game



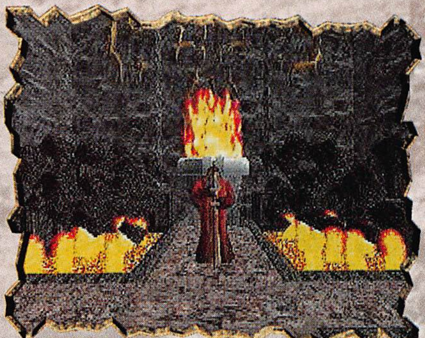
Mad Dog McGamer

King's Field II, following on the heels of the wildly successful original, is hands down the best thing to happen to the PlayStation! Every aspect that made the original a hit are back - with reinforcements! ASCII has made an incredible effort to give you the best RPG to find it's way to the home market. Making an encore performance are the artfully designed landscapes and brilliant effects of the first 360°, fully rendered masterpiece, but this time, ASCII has included a host of improvements that will fulfill your every fantasy!

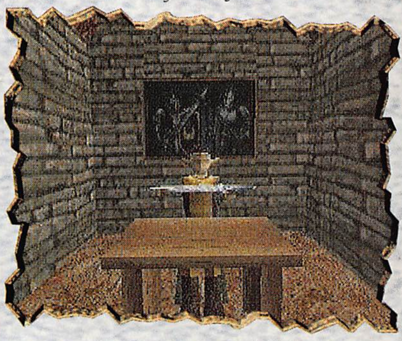




Story line, sound, action and graphics made their way to the top of ASCII's to do list with upgrades ranging from original compositions in beautiful stereo sound to SGI rendered cut sequences!



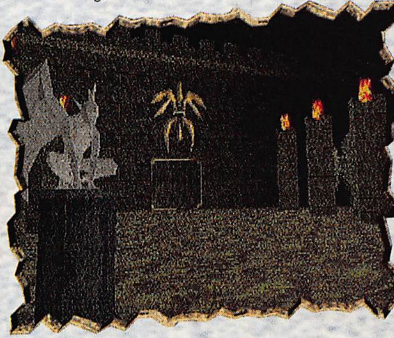
The blood red skies of Verdite look on as a lone figure ventures out into the grisly scene of carnage and death. Austin Lyle Forester, prince of the bedamned kingdom of Verdite unsheaths the mighty Excellector and prepares his heart and soul for the journey just set before him...



The young prince had listened in horror as Leon spun the tale of the past ten years of chaos and destruction. After Alexander's triumphant return from Melanat with the Moonlight Sword, peace had ensued for five years in the great kingdom as the peasants grew soft...lulled by the prosperity and peace they had enjoyed. But five years later, the sun shone for the last time on Verdite, a great storm was seen on the horizon - a storm with intent of the purest evil. Lightening struck the tower, utterly shattering the Moonlight Sword, and the Holy King, John Alfred Forester fell ill.

When the king recovered, he was a changed man. It was as if the devil himself had taken the throne of Verdite. The reign of terror he ushered in after his recovery had no parallel in all of history. Evil demons of every conjuring imaginable took to the kingdom like a hungering plague, littering the beautiful hills and plains with the terrible carnage only a bloodthirsty God could permit. Alexander had tried in vain to help his former friend, the king, but after finding only the remaining hilt of the great Moonlight Sword, he gave his life to seal the Demon King within the castle walls.

How could Lyle's own father have done such terrible

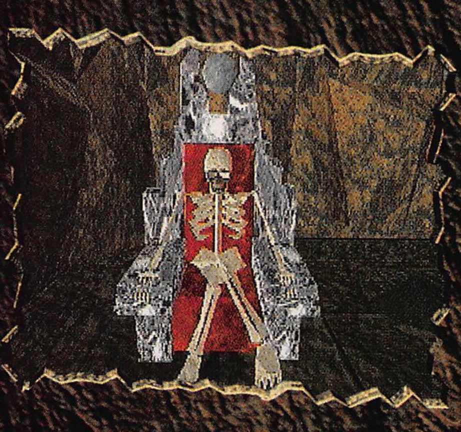


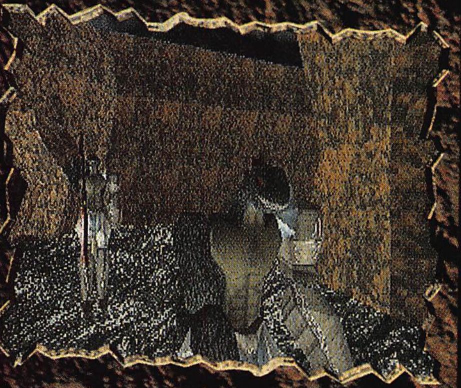
things? Lyle's struggle was brief. The deeds that had transpired over the past ten years would have to be met with the terrible steel of battle, his was the quest for blood...the blood of his own demon father, King John Alfred Forester - UN-Holy King of Verdite!!

This will be your quest in ASCII's sequel to last year's Smash Hit, King's Field.

KING'S FIELD II

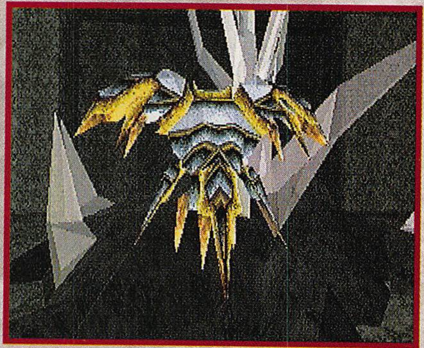
Advertisement



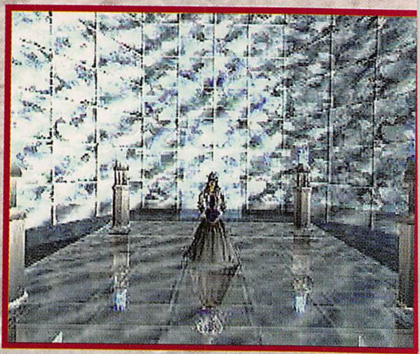




First on the boards was the Story line. In response to consumer requests, and their own dreams for the sequel, ASCII employed a team of experts in the RPG and writing fields to breath the life into King's Field II that would make it a timeless classic. Austin Leininger, formerly "Sir Garnabus" of GamePro Magazine worked with the rewrite along with ASCII's own Jane Cowley and expert GameMasters David Silviera and Mark Johnson to bring the flare of professional Gamers into the plotline, making King's Field II one of the first RPG's to hit the PlayStation completely written for the American Gamer!



Packs, clans, and families of previously undiscovered monsters ravage Verdite as you battle against them with an improved arsenal of over twenty new weapons along with several old favorites! Over 100 new items await your discovery along with the arrival of well over 50 completely new breeds of monsters. These improvements complement the plot well as you journey through the villages of your kingdom speaking with well developed characters that will suck you into their world within moments! ASCII spent a lot of time on the development of new characters in King's Field II. Humor, depth, personality, and history can be found in every character you encounter. Along with each meeting comes a chance for additional sub-plots - and of course, the acquisition of more items and power - as you involve yourself in the lives of your royal subjects and your kingdom.



Naturally, ASCII took the time to improve on the knowledge, use, and appearance of magical spells as well! Forty different magics in five disciplines can be at your command. All magics are either new, or have been redesigned to look and sound as powerful as the gods who invented them!

Next on ASCII's list was the question of sound. As in the original, King's Field II undertones your quest with the terrible wails and screams of the enemy. Those same battle cries of your flesh-hungry enemies louden as they approach, heightening the sense of reality in the game. In addition to this old favorite is the host of original music, written solely for use in King's Field II.

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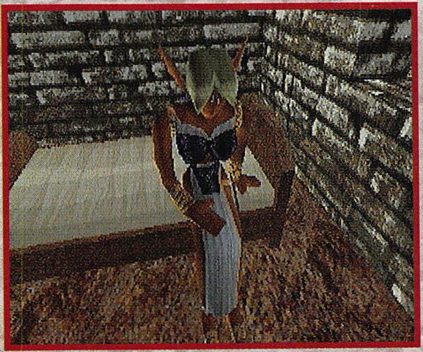
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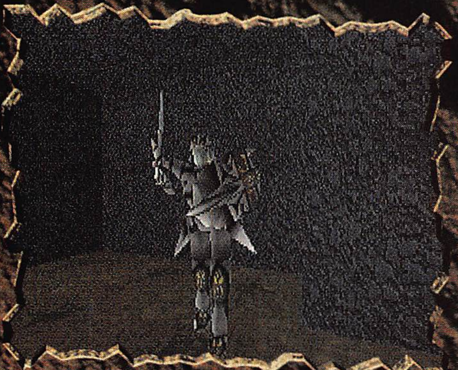
To order by Visa or Mastercard, call 415-780-0166. For the KF II hintline or to charge the guide to your phone bill, call 1-900-288-ASCII (2724). To order by mail, send money order made payable to ASCII Entertainment, P.O. Box 6639, San Mateo, CA 94403. Price is $12.95 plus $2.00 shipping & handling. Not available in stores.

900 line is $0.95 per minute. Callers under 18 must get parental permission to call. Touch tone phone required.

KING'S FIELD II

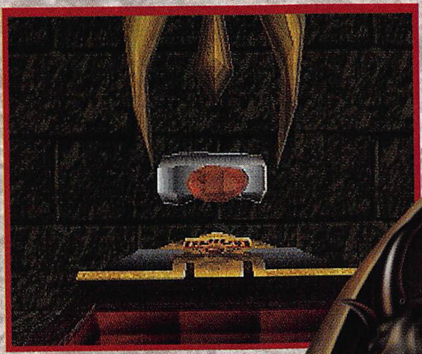


The scores of new music are beautifully composed in stereo to complement whatever scene you are faced with, bringing tension and climax along with a beautifully felt ambiance throughout the game.





Of course, what would an RPG be in modern life without action!? ASCII has taken great pains to provide as much wonderfully gory and personally satisfying carnage as possible! Battles rage throughout your quest with new enemies, new magics, and new weapons. Even battles of epic proportions ensue as you take on the Gods themselves! Additionally, ASCII included several cut sequences in full SGI rendering. Key points in the game are perfectly ushered in with these awesome action scenes of graphical prowess.



Along with the enhanced character definition and overall improvements on landscape and character design, what could possibly make this game any better? Well...perhaps a copy of ASCII's King's Field II Strategy Guide! The same talents and energies that created the King's Field II masterpiece came together again to bring you the strategy book - actually written by the same hand that wrote the game itself! Who better to know than he who was the creator?! The book is beautifully designed of high quality paper and crystal clarity.

ASCII offers all of this, wrapped up in a beautifully rendered 3-D world of enhanced polygon graphics with texture mapped surroundings to give a complete package of absolute perfection!



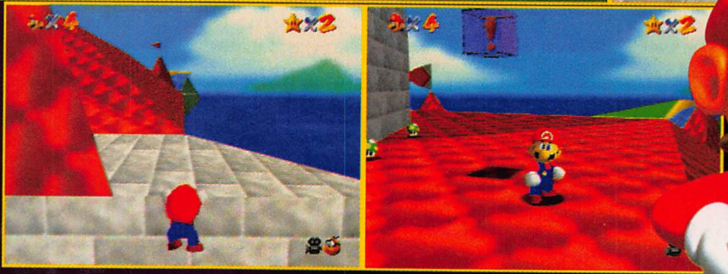
Good Luck to you, mighty warriors, the battle ahead is like none you've ever seen! Choose your weapon wisely and you might even survive!

ASCII ENTERTAINMENT

For more information, visit www.asciient.com

SUPER MARIO 64 — NINTENDO 64 — TRICKY TREK!





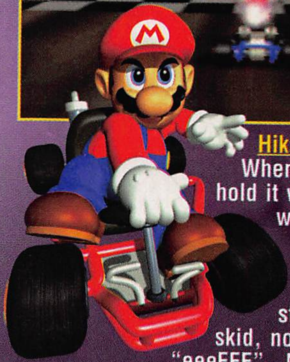


Hikaru - Ever make it to the top of the castle without using the cannon? Well here's a rather tricky way to do it and really impress your friends! Head towards the far right mountain side next to the castle and do a triple jump starting the first jump next to the last tree as pictured above. The second jump must start right where the mountain and ground polygons meet. The third jump should propel Mario towards the top of the mountain side where he'll begin to slide on his bottom as pictured above. From here, perform another jump off his backside aiming towards the side of the castle where it meets the mountaiside. Now perform a wall spring as you hit the castle side aiming towards the castle wall with the tower on it. Phew! For best results, take the mountainside at a gradual angle (not dead on), this will increase Mario's chances of sliding on his backside for the final jump. Mario can't jump from a stomach slide! Hadooookennnnnn!!!

Special thanks to:
Hikaru
&
Knightmare!

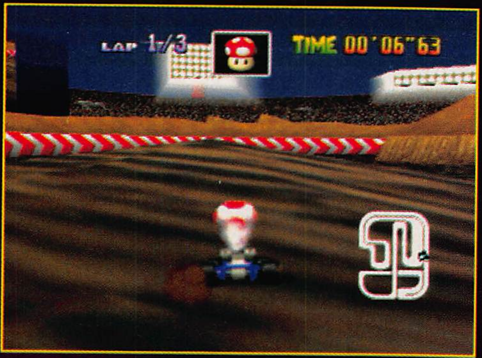
MARIO KART 64 — NINTENDO 64 (IMPORT) — CUTTING TIME TRICK!

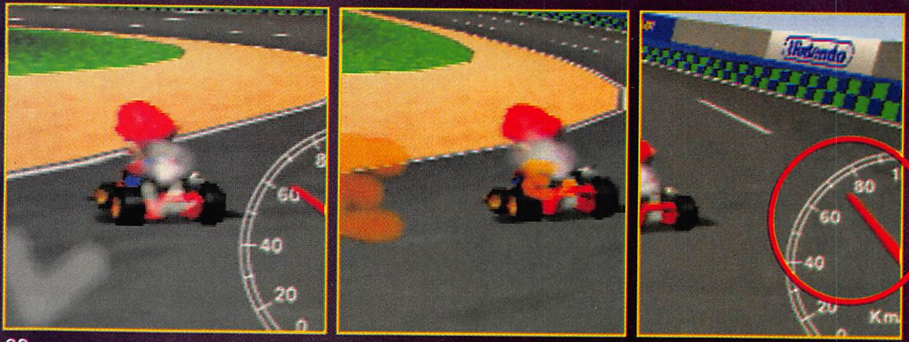




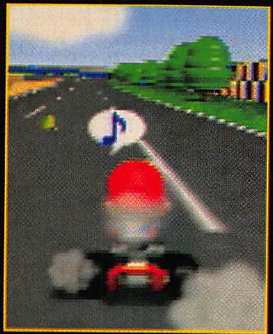
Hikaru - Skid for a quick Mini Turbo boost! When taking a corner, hit the top R button and hold it while gently steering into the turn. This will begin the skid, as signified with a "vvvVVV" coming from your exhaust pipe. Now while still holding R, steer away from the turn, then immediately steer back into it. This will continue the skid, now making the exhause display a yellow "eeeEEE". Now steer out of the turn and back into it again the "EEEs" should turn red. Now just let go of the R button for a Mini Turbo. Your character will give out a shout of joy if done correctly. With practice, you can hold the skid for long periods, or even perform mutiple Mini Turbo skids in one turn to really build up your speed! "VEEEEEEEEE!" That's the sound tires make when in a skid. Gain up to 5 extra KMH or more! Shinkuuuu-Hadooookennnn!!!

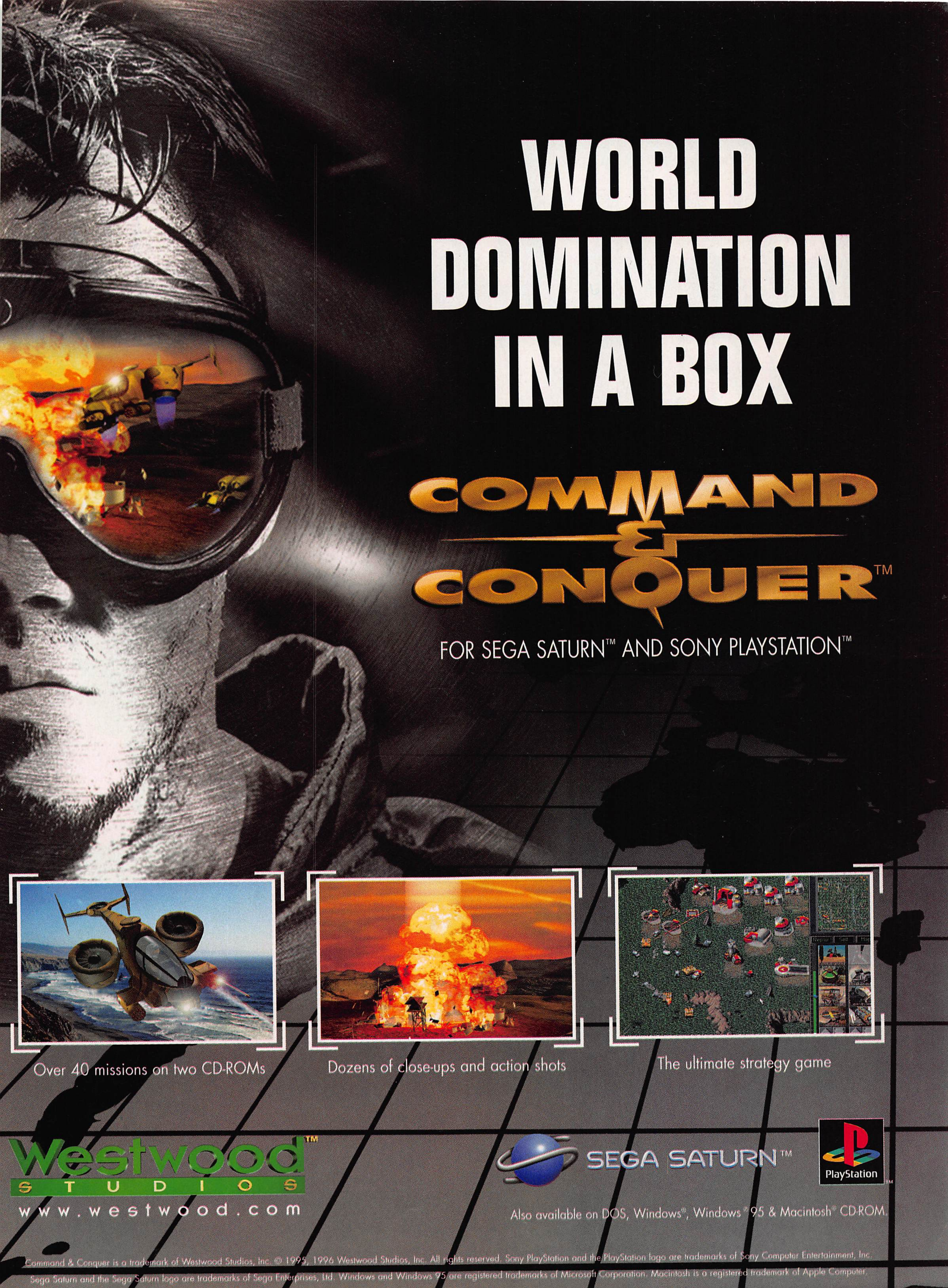
Knightmare - On Wario's circuit drive onto the left hand side of the first ridge after the start line and face the wall. Use a Mushroom speed boost and just as you're about to hit the wall tap (and keep tapping) the jump button. It doesn't work every time, but if you clear the wall you'll save about 30 seconds!



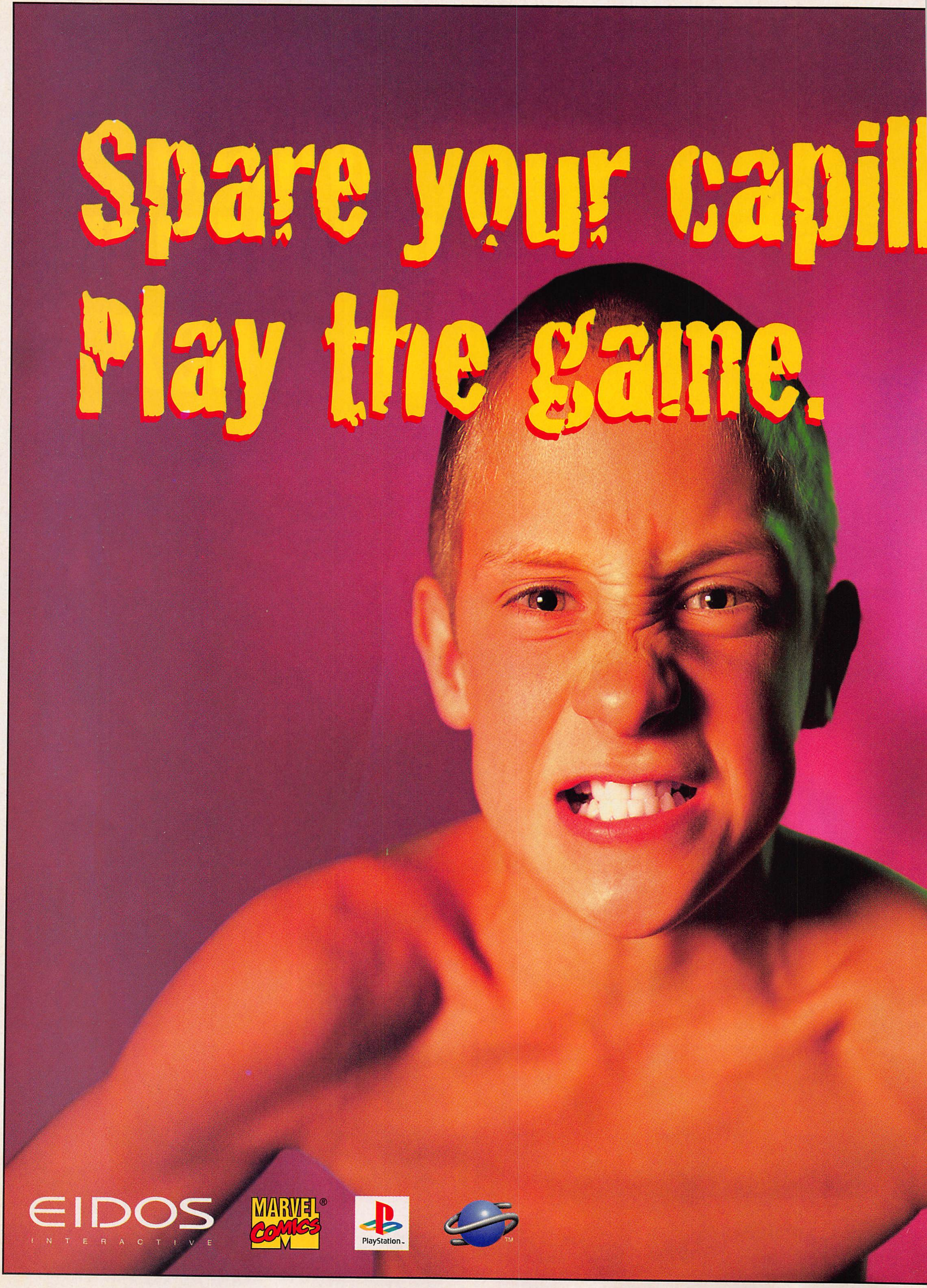


Hikaru - Watch out! Banana peels! No worries, just tap the brakes to recover when you pass over the peel. If done correctly you'll see a "Musical Note" appear above your character's head! Shoryuuuukennnn!!!!





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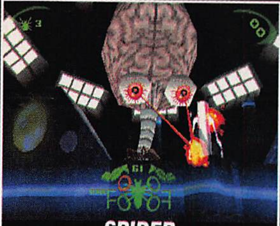

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INTERACTIVE
MARVEL COMICS
PlayStation

VIEWPOINT

Legend
Graphics
Control
Play mechanics
Music
Originality







SPIDER
PLAYSTATION
BMG•CD
ACTION/PLATFORM



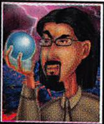
Spider's concept first and foremost is its strongest feature. Playing a spider trying to catch up with your limp dying body is indeed intriguing. Right off, the CG will astound you with its crisp visuals and violent theme. From there, it's on to a fairly basic platform scheme made entertaining by the neato play mechanics and solid soundtrack. The bosses are meaty as well; I just wish there were a couple more. Boss Studios has done a fine job with the poly's too. *Spider*'s a solid game.

G 8 C 8 P 8 M 8 O 8 **80**



The concept behind *Spider* is a sound one (controlling a cyber-spider in a pseudo-3D environment), but the game never really makes the most of it. It's like a less spectacular version of *Pandemonium*. The graphics are nice in parts, and there is some clever level design, but nothing to make *Spider* scream 'essential purchase.' One for 2.5-D platform aficionados only I'm afraid.

G 7 C 7 P 7 M 8 O 8 **79**



Take a unique game concept (controlling a spider) and mix it with 2.5-D play mechanics and you end up with Boss' *Spider*. Aside from wall and ceiling crawling and the ability to hang from a short length of web, there's nothing really new here. A few moons and a *Crash Bandicoot* ago, this game may have been more captivating, but as it stands, there are better examples of the play mechanics to be found elsewhere. Still, the music and intro are all well done.

G 8 C 8 P 7 M 9 O 8 **78**



TENKA
PLAYSTATION
PSYGNOSIS•CD
CORRIDOR



Tenka will surely please each and every corridor hound. I say that because I really like it, and a corridor fan I am not. The unique storyline and interactive qualities only add to a game with great control, good sound, and hardy visuals. The polygonal environments are among the best around, nearly on par with *PowerSlave*'s, and the light sourcing is generous. Cool, dude.

G 9 C 8 P 8 M 9 O 6 **89**



Psygnosis' first POV shooter is a competent, if un-original, genre entry with solid *Quake*-style polygon graphics and awesome surround sound. The levels are a bit too compact for my liking (probably to keep the frame rate up) but there's no denying that the hideous mutant bionoids are cool, or that taking a creature's head off with a single shot isn't incredibly satisfying. PS owners seeking a corridor game with the emphasis on combat would do well to give it a whirl... after *PowerSlave*.

G 9 C 8 P 7 M 9 O 7 **88**



Codename Tenka is a highly competent 3D corridor blood fest, with excellent (and sometimes downright deviant) polygon monsters. I'd agree with me ol' pal Knightmare 100 percent with the game's failings though; there's a lack of variety of weapons (more chunky rocket launchers, please!), the levels are far too small... but there's certainly enough of them! Time to rent this one, people!

G 8 C 8 P 7 M 7 O 7 **80**



NANOTEK WARRIOR
PLAYSTATION
VIRGIN•CD
3D SHOOTER



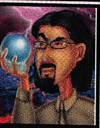
Sure, I'll play *Nanotek Warrior* again, I love it. What's that? There's new enemies, enhanced level design, and new bosses? Great! I love the environments, I crave the ultra-responsive controls, and I dig the intensity level. It's definitely hard-core. As far as the last minute additions go: Cleaned-up graphics—right on. New enemy & level design—wicked and tough. Beefed-up boss scenarios—exactly what this game needed. *Nanotek*'s 3D shooting as fast and furious as one could ever desire... and there's not much of that going around.

G 8 C 9 P 8 M 9 O 8 **86**



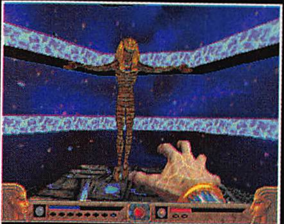
Why are we re-viewpointing *Nanotek Warrior*? Simple. After our review in last year's December issue, Tetragon took into consideration many of our criticisms and changed the game accordingly. Thus, this new version features more enemies, more spectacular explosions, cooler bosses and best of all, more balanced gameplay. It's still one tough shooter, but now when I die it's my fault as opposed to some cheap hit. Cool!

G 8 C 9 P 9 M 8 O 8 **90**



This game rocks. Imagine a *Tempest 2000* that has been turned inside out, texture mapped, light sourced, and pulled through infinity. The graphics are smooth and fast, with wonderful, luminous weapon blasts. And adding to the highly kinetic action is an awesome techno soundtrack. Fans of *Tempest* are totally gonna dig this revisionist interpretation of the "shooting down a tube" theme. They've even thrown in some great boss encounters. Good show, Tetragon and Virgin.

G 9 C 8 P 8 M 9 O 9 **90**



POWERSLAVE
PLAYSTATION
PLAYMATES•CD
CORRIDOR



PowerSlave was and is a spectacular Saturn game, easily the best SS corridor type by a mile, and here on the PS it's even better, with 60fps close-ups and spectacular lighting. Much of the game is open air, rather than hall after hall, and the platform elements add tremendously to the game play. These Lobotomy guys are serious, folks. Even those (like me) weary of corridor games will embrace *PowerSlave* and walk like an Egyptian.

G 8 C 9 P 10 M 10 O 9 **96**



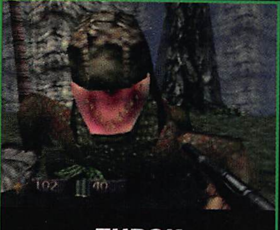
After the awesome Saturn version of *PowerSlave* I had my hopes up for the PS version and Lobotomy hasn't disappointed. Cleaner graphics, new level design, and more realistic lighting coupled with *PowerSlave*'s trademark innovative non-linear level structure, atmospheric sound and action-packed gameplay all go to make this the best corridor game yet seen on the PS. *PowerSlave* is fresh, atmospheric, violent, long lasting and above all, fun! Purchase immediately!

G 9 C 9 P 10 M 10 O 8 **96**



Lobotomy are the developers to watch for, especially after you've gunned down the masses of mutant mummies present in this offering. Taking the *Doom* genre one step further, there's level after level of combat carnage coupled with cunning puzzles to complete, some really excellent monsters (with supreme AI), supreme music and a whole load of secrets to find (including those team dolls!). I'd go as far as saying this is the best 3D corridor game on the PlayStation. Buy it now; there's MONTHS of gameplay here.

G 8 C 9 P 9 M 8 O 8 **90**



TUROK
NINTENDO 64
ACCLAIM•CART
CORRIDOR/ADVENTURE



Iguana, with their 1st N64 title have basically said: "KABOOM! Take this on, gamers, we've created the ultimate 3D adventure, and we just got started!" *Turok* is man-style, adrenaline-boosting 3D gaming, packed with mouth-watering beasts, massive environments, platforming, puzzle solving, climbing, tunneling, and the best AI I've perhaps ever seen. Leave the beasts be and they turn on themselves! Crunch! It's big, it's bad, it sounds awesome and it plays like a dream with the best control mechanism in years. OK? Allllllrighty then!

G 10 C 10 P 9 M 9 O 8 **97**



When corridor game players die, this is where they go. *Turok* is corridor heaven! Get ready for the most detailed, realistic enemies ever; atmospheric sound; huge immersive environments and cool, COOL weapons! Aside from the fog (which I admit *is* a pain) these are the most advanced graphics yet seen in a videogame. And this is first gen 64-bit!!! Turok scores big in the gameplay department too. The control system (like the mouse/keyboard combo on PC) is AWESOME, while the mixture of exploration and destruction is up there with the best of them. I'm not sure I like the re-appearing enemies or lack of ammo, but when everything else is this good—who cares!?!

G 10 C 10 P 10 M 9 O 9 **99**



Forget the fog and believe the hype. *Turok* is the best 3D corridor game in existence. Yep, you read that correctly. Huge sprawling levels. More enemies than you've ever seen before. Almost-constant 30 fps action. Graphics so sharp and detailed that they'd make it into a 32-bit CG introduction. An involving plot. Shockingly involving gameplay. Monsters which animate perfectly. The most impressive bosses ever seen in any video game. Beasts fighting each other. Loads of secrets and cheats... Buy without hesitation.

G 10 C 10 P 10 M 8 O 8 **99**

What a month for corridor games! Yippee!!! Now this is pure carnage on a cartridge, the very best version of *Doom* you'll ever get to play. Thirty levels of in-your-face action with loads of enemies on screen (over twenty in some places!!), all-new textures on everything and the classic, blasting gameplay that everyone loves. This could have been a straight port with cleaned up graphics, but Midway went the extra mile and should be congratulated for giving us exactly what we want. Gore, gore and entrails! Whoopee!!

G 9 C 9 P 10 M 10 O 2 **96**

In the same month that we get the most advanced 3D POV shooter ever (*Turok*), we also see the re-appearance of the game that started it all: *Doom*. But with competition like *Turok*, can *Doom* possibly hold its own four years down the line? Heck, yeah! *Doom 64* rocks like no other! As with previous versions of *Doom*, the emphasis is squarely on action. Kill, kill, get a key, then kill some more! The 64-bit graphics and sound add to *Doom's* trademark atmosphere, while the 30+ all new levels are works of art. It may not look as impressive as *Turok*, but what it lacks in beauty, it more than makes up for in action. Feel the fear.

G 9 C 9 P 10 M 9 O 3 **97**

I wish this was my favorite category, it's bursting with software. Anyhow, *Doom 64* is without a doubt the most superb version of *Doom* that exists today. The textures are blessed by the N64 as is the lighting. Even the sound is ominous, not to mention the beasts which look soooo much better here than anywhere else. This game just keeps on giving all the way through. Simply divine. Buy it right now!

G 9 C 9 P 7 M 9 O 5 **95**



DOOM 64
NINTENDO 64
MIDWAY•CART
CORRIDOR

Sure, *Soul Blade* crushes *FMM* in terms of graphics, but gameplay is king, and AM2 rightfully claims the throne. They've thrown everything into *MegaMix*: Over 85% of the moves from *VF3*, true 3D movement, and perfect control. They tossed the high-res of *VF2*, added awesome lighting effects and increased polygons instead, and maintained the glorious 60 fps we've come to expect of Sega fighters. I can't believe how far the Saturn has come. This is the best home fighting game available...until *VF3*, I'm sure.

G 9 C 10 P 10 M 9 O 8 **98**

Lets me see now. *Fighting Vipers* vs *Virtua Fighter 2.5* with 12 secret characters, better graphics than *FV*, two different game styles (*VF* and *FV* rules), survival mode, multiple one player paths, perfectly graded difficulty and a treasure chest of secrets. I think its safe to say that this is a good game. I've always preferred *VF2*'s instinctive, fluid, precision gameplay to all other 3D fighters, and *MegaMix* elevates it to the next level. It may not be the best looking fighting game out there, but in my opinion it's the best playing, and that's what counts. A fighter from the Gods!

G 9 C 10 P 10 M 9 O 9 **93**

Fighting games don't get much better than this, I'm afraid. You'll be hard pressed to find this many characters in any 2 games. From the whimsical (the Daytona car fighting a piece of meat), to the sensuous (Honey vs. Pai), to the serious, (Akira vs. Bahn), *FMM* has variety to burn, along with the juggling and ring annihilation you love in *Vipers* and the superb gameplay and animation from the *VF* series. AM2's got this genre dialed.

G 8 C 9 P 9 M 9 O 8 **90**



FIGHTERS MEGAMIX
SATURN
SEGA•CD
FIGHTING

Hey, what's this? NOT a 3D corridor game? But you still get to shoot things, right? Okay!! This is a real treat for fans of the *Strike* series, involving you in a cunning weave of intrigue (thanks to cool if a little grainy FMV) and some pretty darned difficult levels. Analog control makes this game control delightfully and there's loads to shoot, but the game is marred a little by slowdown, those wafer-thin building explosions and enemies which attack when off-screen. Other than that, a veritable chopper frenzy, and no mistakin'!

G 8 C 8 P 7 M 7 O 6 **89**

Why must Saturn owners wait so long for 3rd party multi-format games?! EA has added some extra stuff exclusive to the Saturn version (see my review), but not enough to warrant a three month delay. The game itself is a worthy addition to the *Strike* series, with the traditional blend of action and strategy accompanied this time by polygon models, realistic CD sourced terrain, quality FMV and cool movie-like set pieces. Only the high difficulty level and choppy frame rate spoil the party, but it's still a must-have for *Strike* fans.

G 7 C 8 P 8 M 7 O 7 **83**

You either like Electronic Arts' *Strike* series or you don't. Fans were no doubt overjoyed with PlayStation *Soviet Strike*. And guess what? Saturn Strike is even a hair better. Sure, the Oliver Stone-style mixed media FMV is a bit grainier on Saturn (no surprise there), but play the game with the *NiGHTS* pad and you'll be in *Strike* heaven. It still gets a bit choppy when things pile up on screen, but it remains a bit smoother overall than PS *Strike*. If you like the *Strike* series and don't already have the PS version, this will make you very happy.

G 8 C 9 P 7 M 7 O 8 **88**



SOVIET STRIKE
SATURN
EA•CD
SHOOTER

What? Another 3D corridor game to review?! Bibble!! Thankfully, this happens to be a great conversion of another *Doom*-style classic. Think *Doom* with swords and you're on your way to realizing the fun you can have slicing a host of increasingly gibbering monsters into a pile of goo. More features than the PlayStation version, three characters and involving gameplay. Buy *PowerSlave* first, then this pumping version.

G 8 C 8 P 9 M 8 O 7 **90**

Hexen was one of the few *Doom* clones that actually managed to improve on id's classic, and was generally considered to be the best PC corridor game up until *Duke Nukem 3D*. Probe has managed a respectable conversion—much better than the PS tragedy—but still not as smooth as Lobotomy's *PowerSlave*. Fortunately, the genius of Raven's game design shines through, and the adventure based gameplay still cuts the mustard by today's standards. One thing's for sure: it positively hoses all over Saturn *Doom*!

G 9 C 9 P 9 M 8 O 6 **92**

Hexen, although smoother on the SS, is one pixely game. It is however, one of the best *Doom* incarnations of the bunch, thanks to some keen design elements (like being able to carry items) and great level design. The puzzles in *Hexen* are fierce and the game's far less forgiving than *Doom*. The beasts are ultra nasty as well. Truly demonic creatures populate every crack and crevice. After playing the SS version I'm looking forward to the N64 game more than ever.

G 5 C 8 P 8 M 8 O 7 **75**



HEXEN
SATURN
GT INT.•CD
CORRIDOR

Take the best-selling 3D corridor game of all time, employ programmers with no Saturn experience, observe *Doom* 3DO and mix it all together. Whaddya got? This shambling and indeed tragic port-over. We've seen *PowerSlave* on the Saturn. It can do 3D. This however, is an insult to id, the Saturn and even me (I had to waste my time plodding through appallingly unoptimized PlayStation code). Three frames per second of animation? What? An absolute disgrace. This is a twisted version of a hallowed classic, reduced to a mockery of its former self. Appalling.

G 2 C 4 P 5 M 5 O 1 **30**

I love *Doom*. *Doom 64* rules. But Saturn *Doom* isn't even fit to be mentioned in the same viewpoint. If *Turok* is corridor heaven then Doom (this version) is corridor hell. It's the same trademark gameplay and level design as PS *Doom*, but the graphics are unbelievably pixely, the frame rate is appalling and sound effects are feeble. It's nice to be able to use the analog controller, but that alone can't save this substandard port. If you want a corridor game this month, get *Hexen*, or better yet, *PowerSlave*.

G 5 C 7 P 8 M 6 O 6 **50**

Oh my, what tragedy this is. Is it not painful enough simply to play Doom again? I guess not. Well, they've drudged this one up from the bottom, oh *Doom* warriors. Even the most hallway dependent will surely gaggle with dismay as they witness the horrific frame rate and broken sound effects in this game. I'd rather scrub the floor, really.

G 6 C 5 P 3 M 4 O 2 **42**



DOOM
SATURN
GT INT.•CD
CORRIDOR

I can't believe I'm finally reviewing a Scavenger game. The wait was certainly worth it, as *Amok* is a total blast to play. Whether probing the murky depths or scampering above ground, the game engine is fast and smooth. And though the screen shots may look blocky, wait till you see this thing in motion (where have I heard that before?). Stellar music and great explosions round out this fine package. A word of warning though; this game is hard.

G 8 C 9 P 9 M 9 O 8 **88**

Well, its about time! Scavenger has been working on this pretty much since I started my career, and it's nice to finally see it getting a release. And hey! Surprise! It's a cool game! The graphics may be a little blocky, but the frame rate is smooth and the action is full-on hardcore blasting. Both vehicles control like a dream, and there are an unfeasible amount of secrets and enemies tucked away in each of the games 10+ levels. Add to that multiple camera viewpoints, a pumpin' soundtrack and real-time cut scenes, and you've got a game that blasting fans are gonna love.

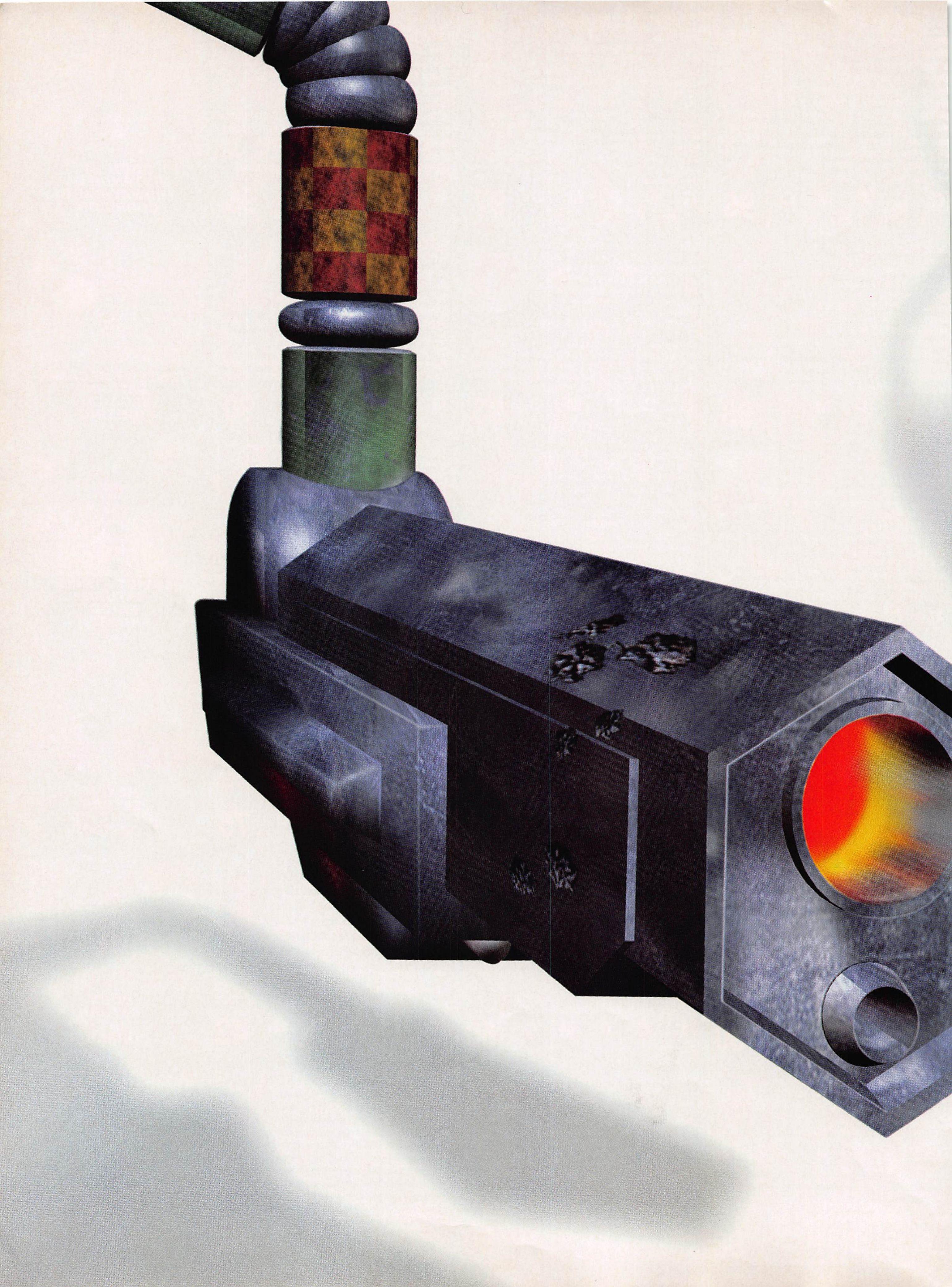
G 8 C 8 P 8 M 9 O 9 **90**

After baking in Scavenger's oven for over 2 years, *Amok* has finally seen the light of day. The amazing thing is, it's still fresh! *Amok* is search-&-destroy gaming at its highest level. Both submerged and above ground, the action unfurls at a blistering pace, while the deep, moody soundtrack bellows the despair of its grim world. *Amok*'s a deep, involved adventure and thusly, quite hard, as it should be. Savor this one my friends, it was a long time coming.

G 9 C 10 P 8 M 9 O 9 **92**



AMOK
SATURN
SCAVENGER•CD
SEARCH & DESTROY



ACTIVISION®

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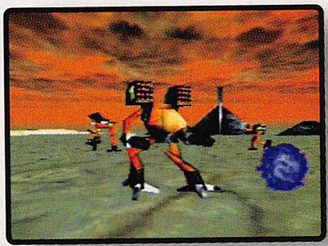
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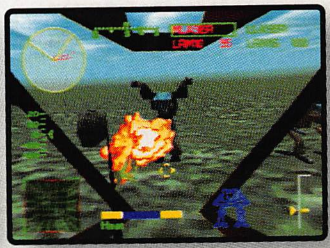
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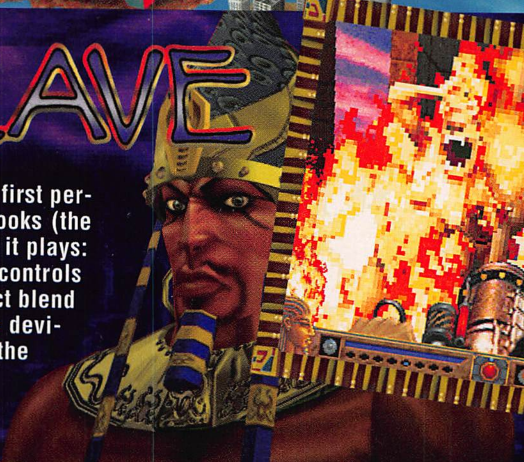
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POWERSLAVE





R REVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - LOBOTOMY

PUBLISHER - PLAYMATES

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - MARCH '97



KNIGHTMARE
Ramses Rules!

PowerSlave on Saturn is probably my favorite single player first person shooter of all time. Not just because of the way it looks (the best 3D corridor engine on Saturn) but because of the way it plays: *PowerSlave* is a triumph of intelligent game design. Its fluid controls and RPG trimmings give it the perfect blend of exploration and action, while the deviously-hidden team dolls make it the longest lasting corridor game I've ever experienced. So to say I was looking forward to *PowerSlave* on PS is something of an understatement. Thankfully, all of the essential elements that made Saturn *PowerSlave* so brilliant are intact. This is basically the same great game, albeit with a few significant changes. The responsive controls are the same (the most instinctive yet on the PS), the number of levels are the same, the weapons are the same, the artifacts are the same and all but one of the monsters are the same (the red spiders have become blue scorpions).

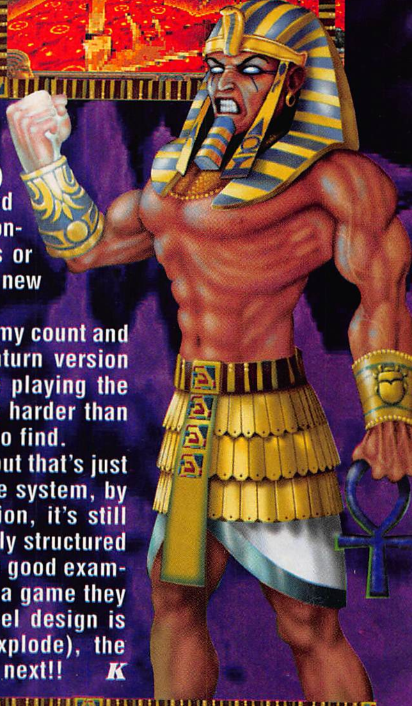




However, *PowerSlave* PS runs on a different graphics engine to Saturn *PowerSlave* (cleaner graphics, more realistic lighting but a lower frame rate) and this has meant some changes. Most notably, some of the level's have had to be re-designed to cater to the weaker engine. For the most part this is just confined to the opening area of the level, but in some cases (like Amun Mines or Cavern of Peril) it has meant a complete overhaul. This isn't a bad thing—the new levels are cool enough—but they are a lot smaller than anything on Saturn.

Thankfully, Lobotomy has taken advantage of this re-design to up the enemy count and re-distribute the team dolls. For someone like me who's played the Saturn version inside and out, these changes came as a welcome surprise—it was like playing the game for the first time all over again!! PS *PowerSlave* is also noticeably harder than the Saturn version, with many more enemies to combat and less life bars to find.

In balance I would say the Saturn version is the slightly better of the two but that's just nit-picking. *PowerSlave* PS is still the best corridor game available for the system, by a long way. Even though the engine isn't as smooth as the Saturn version, it's still smoother than any other game of its type on PS, and the quest is as perfectly structured as ever. Finding all those team dolls will take you months! *PowerSlave* is a good example of what happens when dedicated games players get together and make a game they would want to play. The sound is perfect, the control is perfect, the level design is inspired and short of the occasional slow-down (mostly when things explode), the graphics are brilliant too. I can't wait to see what Lobotomy is going to do next!! K





LOBOTOMY INTERVIEW

PowerSlave impressed us so much that we sought out the game's creators, Lobotomy Software, for a quick one on one. Under the spotlight are project leader Brian McNeely and Saturn lead programmer Ezra Dreisbach.

GF: Tell us a bit about Lobotomy's background?

BM: Paul Lange, Dane Emerson, Scott Perras and myself quit our jobs at Nintendo of America about four years ago to start Lobotomy. We worked out of Paul's apartment for a few months before finding some local office space. With the help of Kevin Chung and Paul Knutzen, we started working on a SNES demo, a boxing game similar to Punch Out!! Although the game was never picked up by a publisher, it helped us get our feet in the door. After a couple of years of more demos, CES shows and Top Ramen, we started working on an Egyptian first-person PC game that was originally called *Ruins*, now known as *PowerSlave*. The development of this game eventually led to our Saturn and PlayStation *PowerSlave* contracts.

GF: How many staff do you currently have working?

BM: There are currently 21 unique individuals working at Lobotomy.

GF: How many games have you made?

BM: We worked on a few products with Microsoft, but *PowerSlave* is our first original title developed completely in house.

GF: Why did you decide your first major game would be a first-person perspective blaster?

BM: We had a lot of ideas for this genre that we thought would be refreshing for gamers, and when we realized that Saturn gamers were in need of a great first-person adventure game, we jumped at the chance to provide them with one.

GF: What were your influences for PowerSlave, *both in terms of theme and gameplay?*

BM: We watched a bunch of Egyptian documentaries on the big screen in our break room and checked out stacks of Egyptian books from the local library. We did a lot of homework and brainstorming to ensure the authenticity of the theme. As far as gameplay goes, I guess you could say that that part of development just came naturally. Between all of us we have seen several lifetimes of devoted gaming experience under our belts!

GF: What part of the game did you develop first?

BM: As work began on the 3D engine, our art and design teams began putting the framework of the game together on paper. We devoted a few weeks to this until we were happy with all of our concepts. At the same time, David Lawson began modifying and adding new features to BREW, our world editing tool. Paul Schreiber created a tool called Peepshow that we used to set up all of the animations in the game, and Jeff Blazier developed an editor for object placement and ambient lighting. When all of these elements were ready, we started putting it all together to make a game.

GF: Most of the other corridor games, particularly on Saturn, seem to run very slowly in comparison with PowerSlave. *Was it tricky to keep the speed and frame rate so high?*

ED: The other Saturn corridor games are either ports or *Robotica*! Writing a fast corridor game on the Saturn isn't more tricky than writing one on the PC. People just haven't put much effort into it.

GF: PowerSlave's engine allows for true 3D level design—rooms above rooms—something which Doom *and* Hexen *did not. How difficult was this to implement?*

ED: A full 3D engine is a better match for the Saturn hardware than a strip engine like *Doom*. I don't think you could make a *Doom*-style engine that runs as fast as *PowerSlave* on the Saturn.

GF: The lighting effects in PowerSlave *are exceptional, particularly on the Saturn. How were these achieved?*

ED: I put the dynamic lights in after seeing *Loaded* on the PlayStation. Each of the wall polygons is being drawn gouraud shaded for the static torch light. As each vertex is transformed, the lighting contribution from the dynamic lights is added in. The algorithm is the cheapest, fastest thing I could think of that would still look okay.

GF: There are a number of differences between the PS and Saturn versions of PowerSlave, *most notably the level design and the Team Doll locations. Why the differences?*



Lobotomy Creators Brian McNeely & Ezra Dreisbach

BM: We had to rebuild some stage areas on the PlayStation to cater to the differences in the game engines. During this process we decided to hide one Lobotomy Team Doll in every stage, unlike the Saturn version where the player might find two Dolls in one stage and no Dolls in another.

GF: At what stage in development did you choose to add the Team Dolls, and how long did it take to hide them all?

BM: Scott Branston, our sound engineer, discovered the Bomb-Boost trick while testing the Saturn version. When we were almost finished with the Saturn version, Dominick Meissner, Jeff Blazier and myself came up with the idea to hide the Team Dolls in secret places that forced the player to use the Bomb-Boost trick and other obscure techniques to uncover them. We had to move fast to get the secret areas into the game, so Dominick, Ezra and myself did about two months' work in one week. During this completion time we only slept for an accumulated few hours during an entire week's time, never leaving the office and sleeping under our desks! It was completely insane! When it was all over, after having been awake for nearly three straight days, we collapsed on the floor, laughing hysterically at what we had just done! Soon after, Ezra threw together Death Tank and we put it in the game as a reward for finding all the Dolls.

GF: PowerSlave *is a game that beats its competition in all but one area: multiplayer action. Why did you choose not to include a link-up mode in either version?*

ED: When we began development on Saturn *PowerSlave* there was no Sega link-cable or modem, so we didn't really consider the issue. A multiplayer mode is very difficult to retrofit onto a game, so by the time the hardware materialized, it was too late.

GF: The sound in PowerSlave *is among the best I've heard on any system. Who is responsible for the music and effects?*

BM: Scott Branston is responsible for all the audio in the game. He has a passion for games and an ear for perfection. His secret? Lots of coffee and little sleep!

GF: Who's the guy who did the voice over for the intro and King Ramses voice? He sure sounds familiar.

BM: His name is Don LaFontaine and his voice is used in several entertainment mediums. I don't think a day goes by without hearing his voice on the radio or TV or on a movie trailer. He's *everywhere*. Our US publisher, Playmates Interactive, hired him to do the voice sequences for *PowerSlave*.

GF: Is there anything that you would liked to have improved in the game had you had more time?

ED: I would have liked to have worked more on the monster AI.

GF: Can we expect to see a sequel to PowerSlave *at some point? If so, what kind of new features would you like to incorporate?*

BM: We are considering a sequel but don't have any information about it right now.

GF: What do you guys think of the N64?

BM: The N64 has provided us with some very memorable gaming experiences. We're excited about the future of the system and are really looking forward to games like *StarFox* and *Zelda*. What we've seen so far on the N64 has inspired and motivated us to develop a great game of our own on the system.

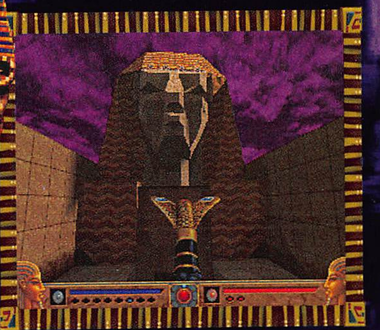
GF: Will you be developing games for N64 in future? An N64 version of PowerSlave *perhaps?*

BM: We are looking to develop a game for the N64 sometime in the near future, and we have several original concepts that could potentially take full advantage of the system.

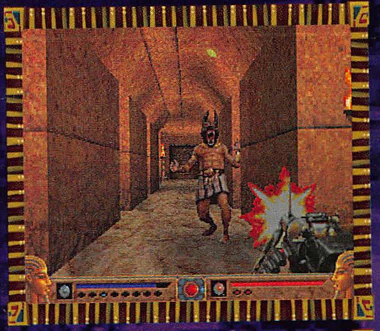
GF: What plans do you have for future games after all versions of PowerSlave *and Saturn* Duke Nukem 3D *have shipped?*

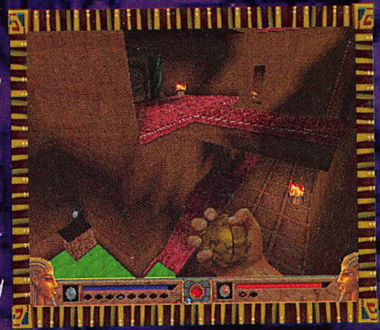
BM: We have started focusing heavily on new gaming possibilities with the idea that there is still much room for improvement in many areas of game development. Undoubtedly, we will continue to develop great games that are industry-competitive and most importantly, fun for gamers!

GF: Thanks for your time guys, and keep up the good work!

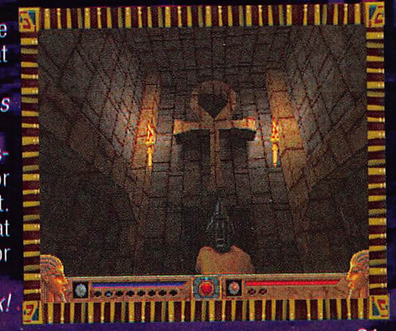












PREVIEW

PlayStation

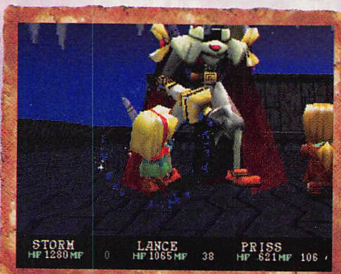
DEVELOPER - G-CRAFT
PUBLISHER - SONY
FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS -1
DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
AVAILABLE - APRIL



TAKUHI Ancient Relic Machines. Remember that.

WILD ARMS
ワイルドアームズ

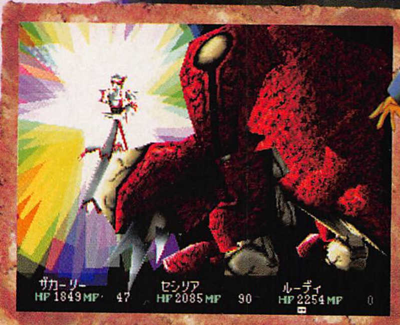


















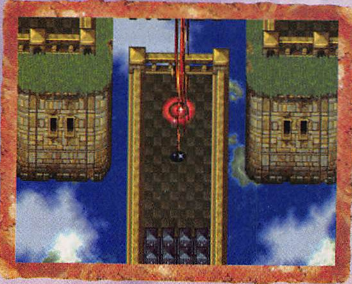
With *Suikoden* a #1 hit and even *Beyond the Beyond* a modest success, Sony has wisely snapped up *Wild Arms* for an American release before it even hit store shelves in Japan. Sony's aiming for a March/April release, leaving the responsibility of amusing RPG players until *FFVII*'s late '97 release solely on this title's shoulders... Can an RPG by the team who's brought us nothing except for mediocre *Gunstar Heroes* rip-off *Gunners Heaven* really be up to that challenge? Surprisingly, yes.

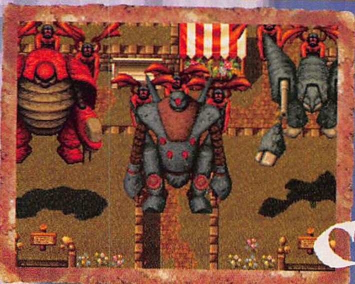
On first glance, *Wild Arms* appears to be a standard RPG with impressive 3D battles and blah overhead graphics. But there's a lot you can't see: The battles not only look good, they have exceptional strategic depth. And the overhead scenes may not be visually stunning, but they're so full of *Zelda*-esque action/RPG style puzzles that they're always fun to explore. The final result is a game that's highly derivative of past RPGs, but uses the best from each to create an exceptionally enjoyable RPG experience.

You control a party of only 3 characters: Wanderer Rody (who looks suspiciously identical to *Gunners Heaven*'s hero), Treasure Hunter Zach, and the rebellious princess of Alderhide, Cecilia. While your roster is slim, the characters are unusually well written. Rody is one of only two people on the planet who can sufficiently synchronize with artifacts unearthed from a society that existed a millennium ago, tools called "ARMs" (Ancient Relic Machines, that is... And you thought they were just guns! Which I suppose they are...). This is just the first hint that his past may be more complex than he realizes. Zach and his physical-sciences-loving pet rat Hanpen are searching for a rumored source of absolute power, perhaps in order to avenge an incident in Zach's past that he won't allow himself to remember. And poor Cecilia; she has incredible magic power, a number of cute outfits, and a gentle heart, but a lifetime of the princess treatment has left her thinking that no one really loves her



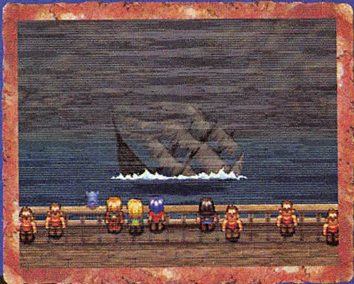








Cecilia



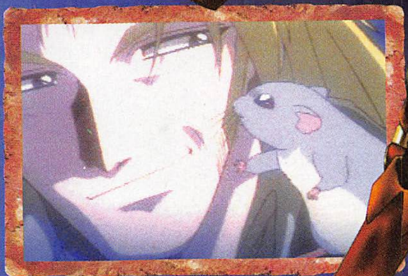




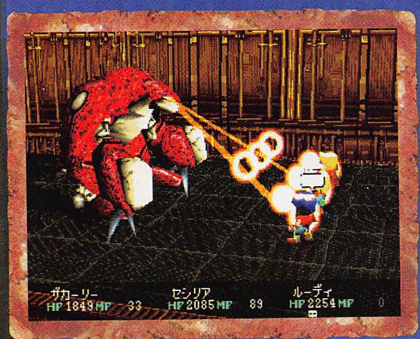



for who she is inside... Oh, Cecilia... I do! Umm... Actually, This probably isn't the time or the place for that. Sorry.

You've got to feel sorry for Media Vision... They announced *Wild Arms* about a week after Square announced *FFVII*, giving their game the undeserved appearance of an *FFVII* rip-off. The similarities are more than skin deep, too... Not only does *Wild Arms* have impressive 3D battles, it also has its own strategic equivalents of *FFVII* call spells and limit attacks. While *Wild Arms* has been in development longer than *FFVII*, and should not be considered a rip-off, it does seem that its developers have learned a few things from the *Final Fantasy* series, such as how to craft battles with heavily strategic elements, and (unfortunately) how to make otherwise cool dungeons become tedious with too many fights. The glut of fights leads to your characters being way too powerful by the time they get to the bosses, causing a serious lack of challenge. But the enemy and boss design are so good I almost didn't even mind. Almost.

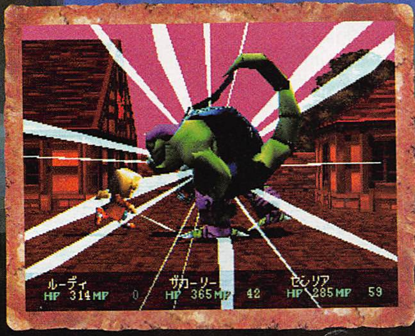
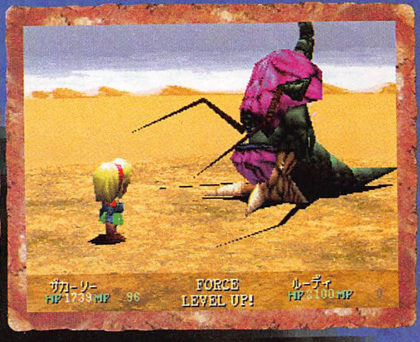


Its other main inspiration was the *Zelda* and *Estpolis* series, a very wise choice, as the game's dungeons are full of cool puzzles and riddles that keep things interesting. I wish they were a bit more challenging (There *were* a few tough ones in the end), but they definitely keep the game moving, and keep you glued to your seat.



Add to this an impressive intro and ending animation and an excellent (but repetitive) soundtrack, and *Wild Arms* has the makings of an epic. Except for its inexcusably brown overhead graphics (that is a part of the storyline, though) and its poor battle balance, *Wild Arms* is a spectacular game, and one of the most riveting RPGs in recent memory. It looks as if *Suikoden* may finally have some company at the top. *T*



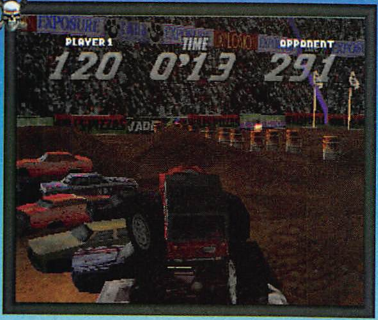



VOLKSWAGEN ROLLS OUT THE NEW CLIMBENHAMMA LINE THIS SPRING! MEATY.

One thing is for sure, there's no shortage of racing games on the rock solid Sony PlayStation. Covering the spectrum from realistic speed thrills (*Ridge Racer*) to futuristic flying (*Wipeout*), it's hard to believe that among the over 15 available, only one off-road racer (ASC's *Hardcore 4x4*) has made the grade. And who better than Psygnosis to exploit this opportunistic gap in the now over-flowing PS arsenal. From the team that brought you two *Destruction Derby*'s comes *Thunder Truck Rally*, an all out four-wheel-drive assault.

The game features three distinctly different modes of play; Endurance, where you travel long distances between checkpoints under grueling conditions (with gargantuan boundaries I might add); Rally, a race to the finish over 7 grueling courses, and of course the always popular car crush, where you, uh, crush junk cars with your big truck. Personally, I'd throw that mode out altogether and save the programming time for more important things... like clipping (pop-up). Not that the pop-up is any worse here than in almost every like title, but given a choice I'd opt for less clipping over the crushing competition.

I often wonder if we should just get over the whole clipping issue and just get on with it. Choose your poison—clipping or fog—and just say alrighty then. It's obviously not going to vanish anytime soon. Actually, hardware with enough force is likely to arrive by 1998-99 with either the PS2, Sega's next console or, if it ever comes out, the M2.







On with the preview then. The characters in this game seem to have been extracted from so many Japanese RPGs, a good, no, great thing. Each is drawn beautifully and comes attached to a different vehicle. The vehicle you choose, by the way, will have a direct outcome on the course ahead. Some are heavy and strong with muddy control, some light and fast with weak bodies. This balance is part of what makes *TTR* such an appealing racer.

The effects in *TTR*, which include light source shading, excellent weather effects, dust clouds, splashing water, and dazzling lens flares are all top-notch PS good stuff. Should you get stuck in a precarious position while driving madly, bouncing realistically over the treacherous terrain, and get notched in a rocky gorge or what not, at a button's press in comes the tow helicopter to carry you to safety, just like real life! I have a button like that in my truck too! AAA ought to have a helicopter, come to think of it.

The control in *TTR* varies. Our disc was marked for

THUNDER TRUCK Rally

P PREVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER -PSYGNOSIS	# OF PLAYERS -1
PUBLISHER - PSYGNOSIS	DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - APRIL



E. STORM
GIT DIRTY...
GIT REEEAAAL DIRTY!



preview only (although the sell sheet, printed in December, quotes reviews, while the game's not due until March) and some of the cars really blew, with the better handlers so weak they exploded on lap 2. The actual steering is excellent with R1 & 2 available for sharper cornering and two available camera angles suit the action just fine. I'm quite sure the game will handle superbly when it's done.

The music in our cart was limited, with only a few tunes available. Heavy metal seems to be the direction they're taking, which fits as tight as OJ's glove.

Judging by Psygnosis games past, I think it's safe to assume that *Thunder Truck Rally* will set the standards for off-road racing on the PS, although *Rally Cross* is looking lovely as well. With any luck, we'll have a *TTR* review in the April GF. ***E***

















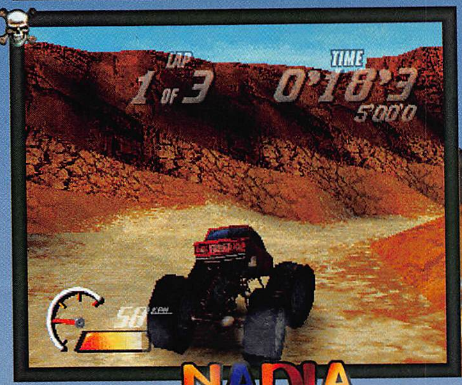


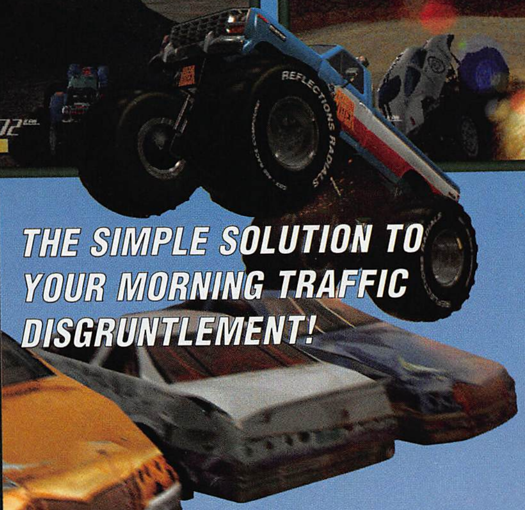












THE SIMPLE SOLUTION TO YOUR MORNING TRAFFIC DISGRUNTLEMENT!



NADIA ENZO Miyuki LEAN

BEAR AARON NAIL MICHELLE KARL

SPIDER











R REVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - BOSS STUDIOS

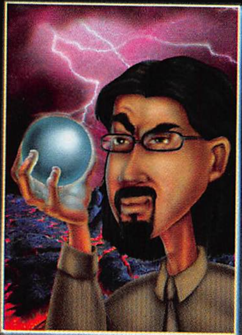
PUBLISHER - BMG

FORMAT - CD

\# OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - FEBRUARY '97



SUBSTANCE D
Where's John Goodman?

The much anticipated arachnid game from Boss Games has finally arrived. In *Spider*, you play a nanotech scientist whose consciousness has been transferred into the body of a nanotechnologically-enhanced tarantula. In your tiny form, you make your way through now-gigantic environments such as a lab table-top, boxes, and the inside of a computer. Other hopped-up bugs and even rats attempt to stop you on your way to the final confrontation with the Big Brain. Thankfully (and predictably) for you, your spider can pick up weapons such as homing missiles, poison gas, boomerangs, and mines. In a neat touch, the appearance of the spider's front legs change when you power up. You're gonna need these weapons too because without them, you're stuck with these puny little front legs that only allow you to attack at close range.







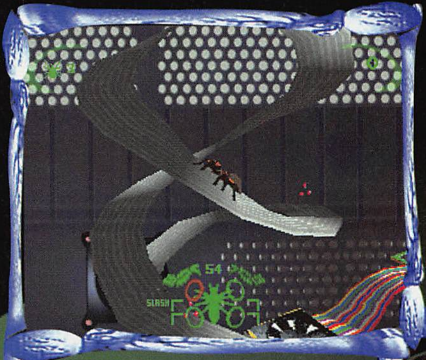


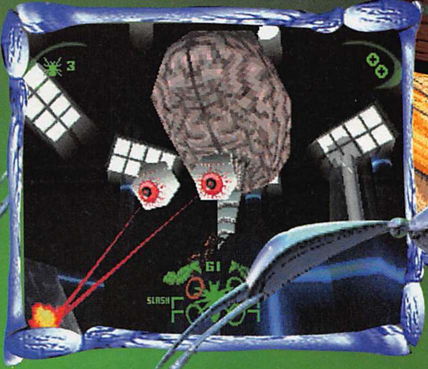




Gameplay is the now-familiar 2.5-D, meaning 3-D backdrops with pretty strict left-right play mechanics (a la *Crash*, *Pandemonium* and *Clockwork*). Basically, you're playing a 2-D platform game. Sure, there is the occasional spot where you are actually going into the screen, but for the most part, you're simply pressing left and right and jumping. In keeping with the platform tradition, you have the usual assortment of timed jumps, conveyor belts, and bottomless pits. Also, being a spider, you have the ability to cling to the underside of platforms and hang from a short web. This adds a little uniqueness to the game play. And, in an attempt to add some variety, there are multiple paths, sometimes taking you to the level exit seconds after entering a stage. On your way through the game, you run into a scant three bosses, the first being the Mechanical Arm, which throws bombs at you and tries to smash you. The second boss, a big lizard, is the most impressive one in the game. A nicely animated and light sourced









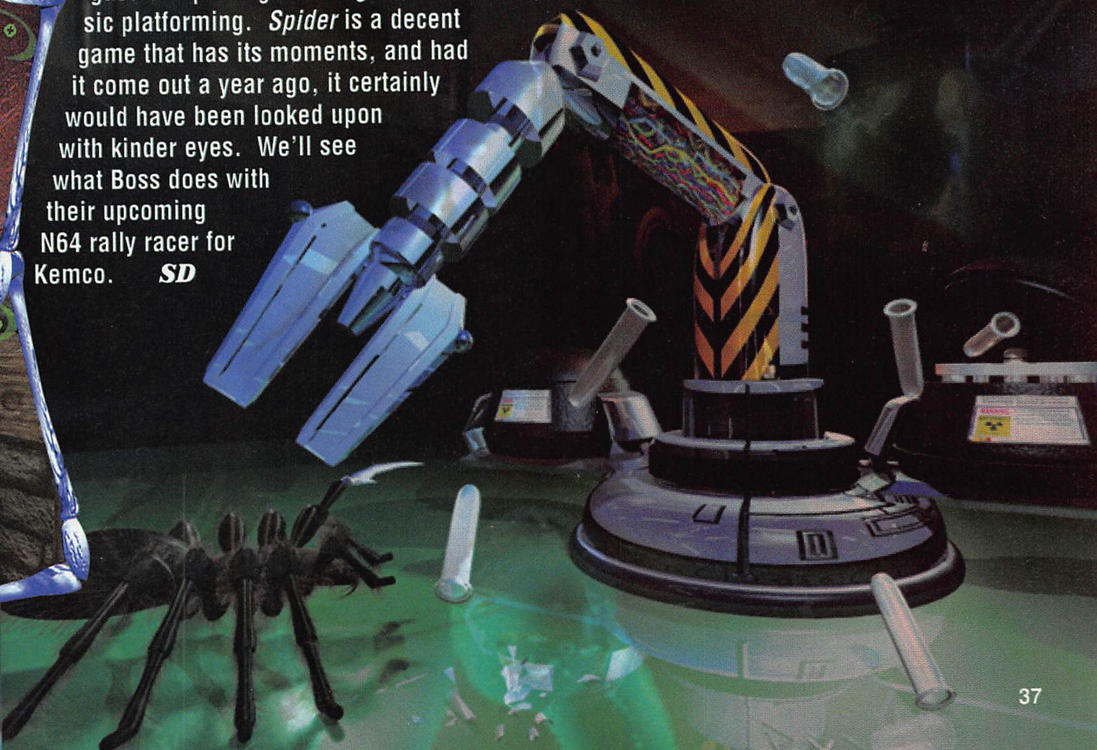
reptile attacks from above while you dodge his flaming breath. The final boss, a goofy looking big brain with two bulging eyes (think *Robocop 2*) shoots lasers and attempts to crush you with a claw at the end of its spine.

As for the graphics, they certainly get the job done. There are some neat looking explosions and camera angle switches, but some levels feature pretty flat backgrounds with only a small ribbon of 3-D elements that the spider walks across. There is also a bit of polygon break up and a rare case of slowdown now and again. For the number of polygons that appear to be being shifted, I guess I expected a little more of a graphical flourish, more light sourcing and a better detailed world. A real sense of solidity is lacking at times as seams between polygons rear their ugly heads. I suppose I would be less critical of the graphic prowess had the game come out sooner and had I not been so spoiled by the lushness, resolution, and solidity of *Crash Bandicoot*. On the plus side, the spider and most enemies animate well, and the game impresses at times (mostly during angle changes and the excellent intro). Thankfully, the music and sound effects are above average. The serene and atmospheric tunes enhance some levels quite effectively, and the sound effects are crisp and appropriate for the on-screen action.

Since Boss is relatively new to the gaming scene, I'll forgive them a bit. A truly fun game is not easy to make. They certainly have a unique concept going and the quality of the intro shows off their background as a special effects house. There is potential. And there's nothing terribly wrong with *Spider*, it's just that it's lacking that spark that puts a smile from ear to ear. The gameplay is simply not intuitive or compelling enough for what amounts to a gussied up 2-D game. Again, I've been spoiled by *Crash*'s graphics and tight, fun, classic platforming. *Spider* is a decent game that has its moments, and had it come out a year ago, it certainly would have been looked upon with kinder eyes. We'll see what Boss does with their upcoming N64 rally racer for Kemco. ***SD***























In the year 2096, the Earth has become a polluted, war-torn wasteland (well, *that* makes a change). The few remaining inhabitants seek only to escape the planet and travel to one of the many off-world colonies where paradise awaits them. One such inhabitant is Tenka, an ordinary man who has labored for many years to buy his ticket to a colony called Extrevius 328-B. However, upon arriving at the colony, Tenka discovers that it is not what it seems. A super corporation called Trojan Inc. has taken over the colony and made it into a manufacturing planet for bionoids—a deadly mutant force that Trojan is creating for its own ends. As Tenka, it's your job to put an end to the evil that thrives on Extrevius 328-B and destroy Trojan Inc.'s plans for good...









I've been looking forward to *Tenka* since it was announced early last year. If you don't already know by now, I'm a huge 'corridor' fan, and was eager to see what new ideas the programming gurus at Psygnosis would bring to my favorite genre. Well, perhaps my expectations were a little bit *too* high, but the finished product is still a rock-solid title that offers thrills, spills, and enough abominations to put Stan Winston out of business.

The biggest advance that *Tenka* offers over most PS POV shooters is undoubtedly the graphics. Most PS corridor games feature 3D texture-mapped environments inhabited by 2D sprite enemies (like *Doom*), but *Tenka* goes one step further by including fully polygon enemies and scenery (like *Quake* on PC). All of the game's enemies are 3D texture-mapped polygon models, allowing for some awesome lighting effects and, best of all, anatomy-specific damage. Why plug away at a large creature's body when you can just take its head clean off in one shot!

The enemies themselves are highly impressive, ranging from basic flying droids to acrobatic robots and bio-mechanical monstrosities that look like they've just escaped from John Carpenter's *The Thing*. Heads on stalks, lumps of quivering flesh with limbs, and one-eyed toadstool monstrosities are just a few of the creatures lurking in *Tenka*'s darkened corridors. The enemy AI is also surprising, with some of the smarter enemies popping 'round corners to take a shot at you, or even ducking down behind cover to avoid your fire. Cool!

Unfortunately, the levels in *Tenka* are a bit too linear and

R REVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - PSYGNOSIS
PUBLISHER - PSYGNOSIS
FORMAT - CD

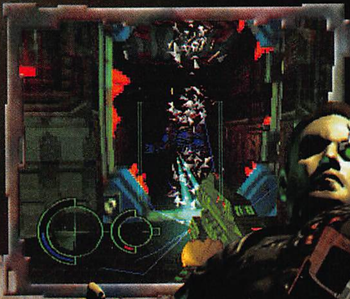
OF PLAYERS - 1
DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
AVAILABLE - MARCH '97



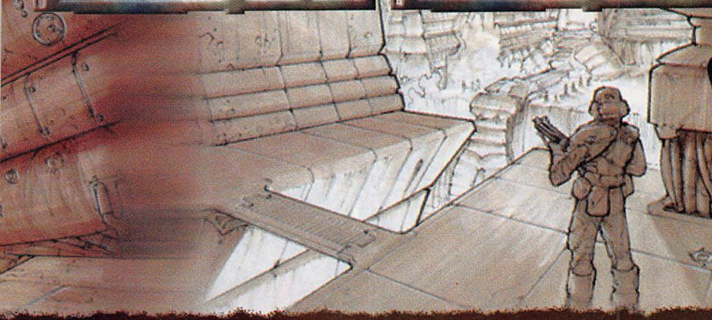
KNIGHTMARE
Prepare for battle...

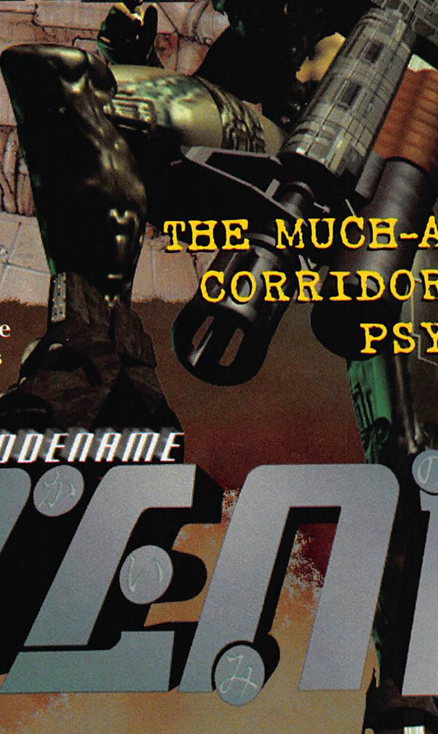












THE MUCH-ANTICIPATED CORRIDOR GAME FROM PSYGNOSIS HAS ARRIVED!

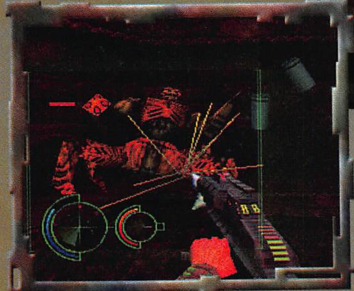
CODENAME TENKA

straightforward for my liking. Most of the environments are pretty small, with none of the epic design that characterizes games like *Doom* or *PowerSlave*. This keeps the frame rate up, and adds an atmosphere of claustrophobic tension, but it's a trade-off that effects the long term appeal of the game. By the time you get about 10 levels in (there's around 30 in total), you get the feeling you've seen it all before. Only the sewer levels offer any real visual variation.

But *Tenka* doesn't depend on its level design. It's not about exploration; it's about shooting things. The emphasis is definitely on combat, and in this area at least the game delivers. Being swarmed by a horde of bio-mechanical













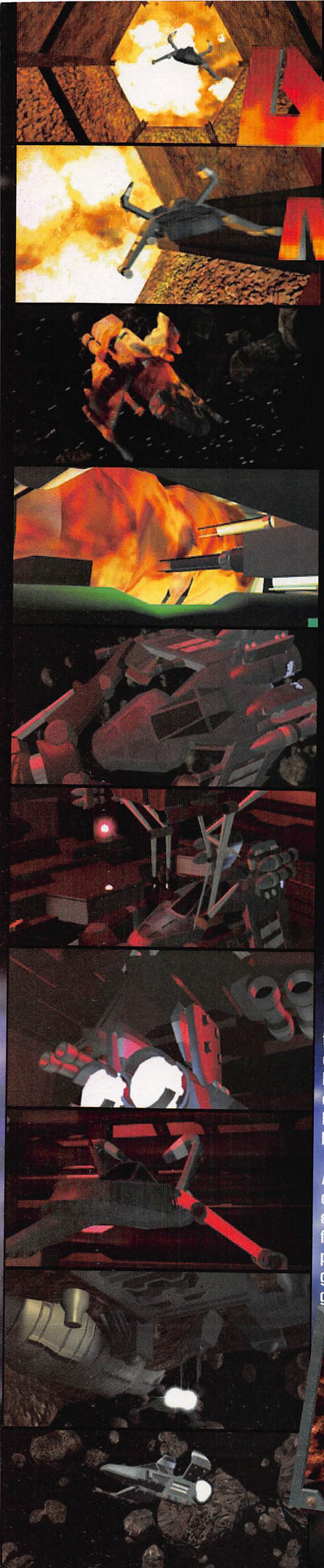
heads (they move fast!) or engaging in a fire-fight with enemies who actually duck behind cover is a nerve-wracking experience and one which corridor fans will appreciate.

The weapon options in *Tenka* are limited but cool. All available weapons are extensions of a single gun and include variations on a rapid fire machine gun, lasers, mines, missiles and grenades. Your gun can be fitted with a laser sight for pinpoint accuracy, and you have an unlimited supply of marker beacons that you can drop to keep track of where you've been.

Unfortunately, *Tenka*'s control system leaves a lot to be desired. Once again in a PS corridor game I can't configure my two L and R buttons to strafe left and right. There are two look buttons (up and down) and mastering these is essential to progressing in the game (there is no auto height aiming like *Doom*). Personally I prefer a single look button, but that's just me. As with most control systems, you do get used to it after a while, but it never feels quite as intuitive as the control system in something like *PowerSlave*.

Before I wrap up, I feel *Tenka*'s sound deserves a special mention. Psygnosis is making a point of including Surround Sound in all their games these days (as well as a Wide Screen option), and they're to be congratulated. The pumping techno soundtrack and appropriate effects are excellent, and really help to create a palpable atmosphere of excitement and tension. Psygnosis has a tradition of aural excellence, and *Tenka* is no exception.

In the great scheme of corridor shooters, *Tenka* succeeds by finding its own niche. It's not as action packed as *Doom*, and nowhere near as clever as *PowerSlave*, but what it does, it does well. Corridor fans will have a blast, but if you're not that keen on the genre, there's little here to convert you. *K*



DESCENT MAXIMUM



With out so much as a word of warning, a review copy of *Descent Maximum* drops into my in-tray. And after a few hours of play, I can see why. Once again a high caliber PC title has been ported to the PS and, er, lost something in the translation. Oh, well..

For those of you who don't know *Descent*, I suppose the best description would be *Doom* in a space ship. Your craft is granted a full 360 degrees of movement, and the level design takes complete advantage of this freedom, leading you up vertical shafts and down rotating corridors in search of each level's power core. Destroy the core and it's a mad 50-second dash to the exit before the whole mine blows up.



Descent Maximum is basically the same game as PC *Descent 2* (even the intro is the same) but with all new levels designed exclusively for the home versions. PC *Descent 2* was a really great game, and it offered a number of significant improvements over the original *Descent*. The engine was better, the enemies were smarter, your craft had a number of cool extra weapons and add-ons (such as the helpful Guide-bot), and the gameplay was much, much fairer (*Descent* was *hard*). All of these additions make it into *Descent Maximum*, along with *Descent 2*'s bitchin' Redbook audio soundtrack, but as with nearly all other PC ports, the graphics let the side down.

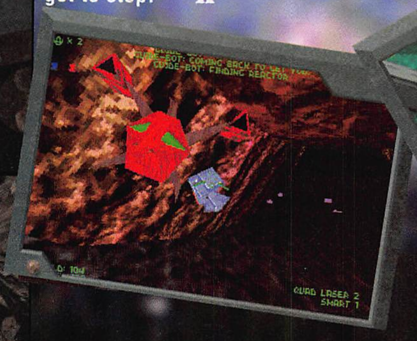




Descent Maximum is an ugly, framey, pixely mess that runs at an average of around 10 fps and slows down even more when the action picks up! The control system translates well onto the PS pad, but at points the game runs so jerkily that it doesn't matter. *Descent* is a disorientating game at the best of times, but with these graphics it becomes downright confusing. I love the way Interplay have audacity to include a 'full-screen' option where the frame rate is even lower! There's really no excuse for these kind of visuals on PS.



I wish I could recommend *Descent Maximum* on the strength of its game design alone, but I really can't see anyone enjoying this other than die-hard *Descent* fans. I'm getting sick of poor PS and Saturn ports riding on the back of someone else's good game design. It's a trend that's got to stop. **K**





R REVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - PARALLAX

PUBLISHER - INTERPLAY

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - MARCH



KNIGHTMARE
Going down?



RUSH HOUR™

P PREVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - PSYGNOSIS

PUBLISHER - PSYGNOSIS

FORMAT - CD

\# OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - 2ND QTR. '97



KNIGHTMARE
The overhead racer lives!



One genre that seems to have completely disappeared with the advent of polygon technology is the top down racer. Short of *Micro Machines*, I can't really think of a successful 32-bit overhead driver, and *MM* was more of an arcade game then a simulation anyway. But thanks to Psygnosis all that is about to change.

In *Rush Hour* the player can choose between eight different cars in one of two categories: Heavy Metal and High Performance. The Heavy Metal cars include a Ford explorer type truck, a Chevy pickup type truck, a jeep and a dune buggy. The High Performance cars, on the other hand, are comprised of a station wagon, a Porsche, a Ferrari and a modern Celica type car. Each car has its own individual attributes, and some are better suited to certain courses than others.

There are eight tracks to race (so far), and all of them are graphically impressive. Psygnosis has taken full advantage of the top down perspective to show track-side detail that would otherwise be missed in a conventional racer. Some courses have you driving along cliff edges, while others take place on a freeway, in a city, and even through a bay area (complete with docked boats).

Currently the game is running at a smooth frame rate, and the scalable camera system lets you zoom in tight or pull away to dizzying heights (almost like a helicopter view). You can choose between tight and loose steering, and although the vehicles aren't particularly responsive, I got used it pretty quickly.

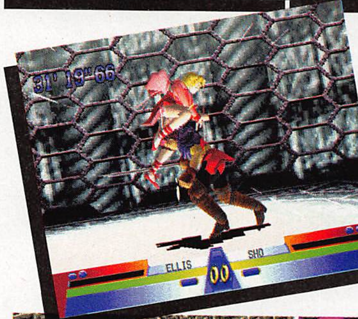
Psygnosis is planning to implement a two-player mode in the final version, though whether it will be split screen or link-up is unknown. Regardless, *Rush Hour* shows a lot of promise, and with a little tweaking this could well be the game to re-invent the top down racing genre. K



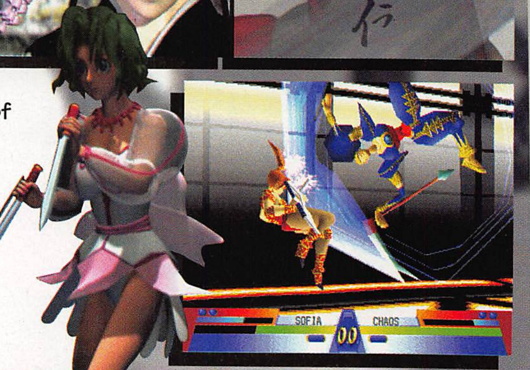






While the vast majority of GF editors now shun this mighty PS fighting series, due to an admitted lack of balance in parts 1&2, (my super cheap Ellis drives them mad) I happen to enjoy it massively. Not only is it supported by a quality anime series but it remains one of the most graphically appealing 3D fighters. The characters alone are worth the price of admission, if you ask me, especially since the inception of Tracy and Chaos. It is true though, in the past one could dance through the game by causing cheap ring-outs or











repeating the same move against a CPU opponent. Whether people other than magazine editors actually do this I do not know. If that has been a complaint of yours as well, you can now put such qualms aside. *Toshinden 3* takes place in huge rooms. That's right, four walls and a ceiling. This alone adds much to the game's appeal. 3 seems to be the transitional *Toshinden*. Also added in 3 are juggles a la *Fighting Vipers*. Wicked combos can be performed as you juggle your opponent literally across half the playfield. The super, or "Rengi" gauge is back too, except now they produce explosive effects which gladly do far less damage than previous versions. When a Rengi is performed, the lights go out (so the backgrounds don't, I'm sure) as huge bursts of flashing madness dance on screen. These are performed, provided you're not blocked, by pressing all 4 buttons or R1&2 simultaneously. It's not so cheap though, as they do minimal damage. They're best reserved for finishing an opponent after you've blocked his, leaving him drained and open. The moves in T3, of which there are many for use both close up and far away, produce gorgeous transparencies but your two








PREVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - TAMSOFT	# OF PLAYERS - 1-2
PUBLISHER - PLAYMATES	DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - MARCH/APRIL



E. STORM
Tamsoft goes back to the drawing board and emerges victorious!









strongest can still be activated by simply pressing R1 or 2. I make it a rule to never dish out this cheapness and wish they'd just take this out once and for all. It certainly shouldn't deter you. Besides that, the control is excellent. The import version of *T3* includes a handy combo chart I hope is in the US version as well. Playmates is adding a training mode which I think is a brilliant idea. The one in *Tekken 2* was phenomenal.

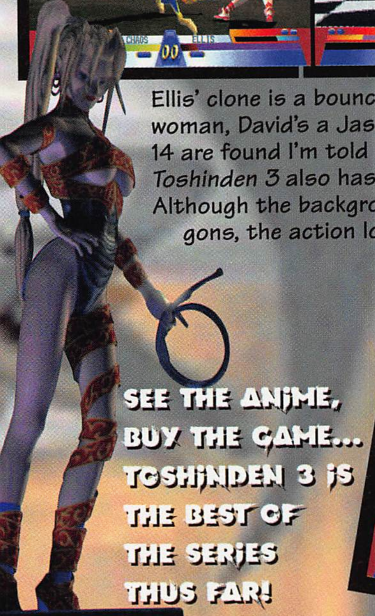
Also new are the 14 available alter-egos in *T3*. Each of the 14 characters has an alternate being attached. Simply beat the game with anyone to receive his, her, or its clone. These are quite interesting.





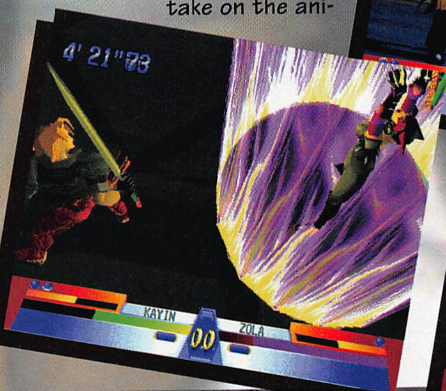






Ellis' clone is a bouncy native, Sophia's a wicked catwoman, David's a Jason-like killer and so on. Once all 14 are found I'm told a few more are attainable. *Toshinden 3* also has an available 60fps mode! Although the backgrounds drop to flat-shaded polygons, the action looks amazing as the characters take on the animation quality of *Tobal No.1*. This is truly an awesome feature that I hope to see more of in future fighters. Lastly, the music in *T3* (as with all Tamsoft games) is excellent. Playmates is shooting for an April release of *Toshinden 3* and my advice to fans is to obtain one immediately. For those who've become weary of *Toshinden* I say at least give this one a try. From this point on the series may take on an entirely new direction, this being the first in the transition. *E*




























I've come to realize just how versatile a system the PlayStation is. Concepts, like those in *Tigershark*, can be fully explored using the PS' (seemingly) endlessly flexible hardware. Naturally, not every title is a shining example of this power, however, as explored conceptions often stumble into reality. *Tigershark* has the CG FMV, the texture-mapped 3D polygons, and the redbook audio, but it seems to have all but forgotten about gameplay structure.

After the short, unremarkable CG intro passes you by, a basic set of control, sound and password options lead you into the game. Even at this point, I felt as though the game wasn't heading in the right direction. Then another CG sequence, briefing you on your upcoming mission, and it's into the game we go. You start the game skimming over the water surface, and after a little experimentation, you'll take a dive only to discover the battle continues beneath the waves. This concept is highly original, and the large levels ensure plenty of exploration over and under the water.

The first stumbling block: Horrible clipping. This quality of PS 3D went extinct with the first generation of software. My second beef: completely uninspired gameplay. Previous mission-based games, i.e., *Strike Point*, *Black Dawn*, have had clearly defined missions, greatly enhancing the game-play. *Tigershark* tells you what needs blasting (power stations, radar installations, barriers, etc.) and yet, between the crude environments and poor controls, you'll be hard pressed to find any of it convincing (or interesting for that matter). Sadly, this steals away from what could have been an extremely involving free-roaming 3D shooter.

Although its execution falls way short of its concept, some might still enjoy the search-and-destroy nature of *Tigershark*'s play mechanics. Let me make this clear, though: The graphics do little to impress, and the questionable gameplay, even after you've given it an open-minded chance, probably won't keep you coming back very often. *G*









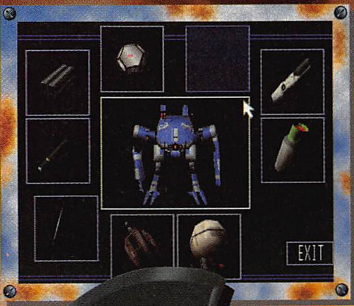
R REVIEW

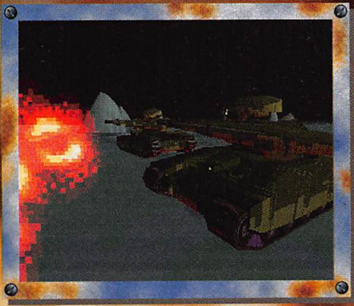
PlayStation

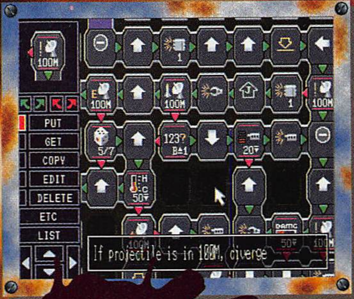
DEVELOPER - GT INTERACTIVE	# OF PLAYERS - 1
PUBLISHER - GT INTERACTIVE	DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - NOW



GLITCH
It just ain't got it.

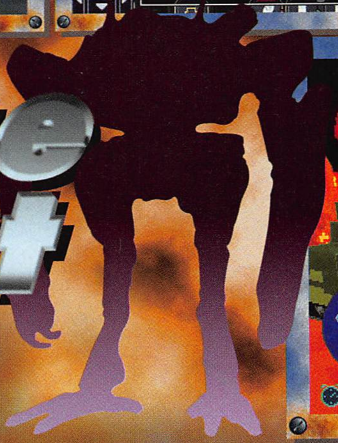


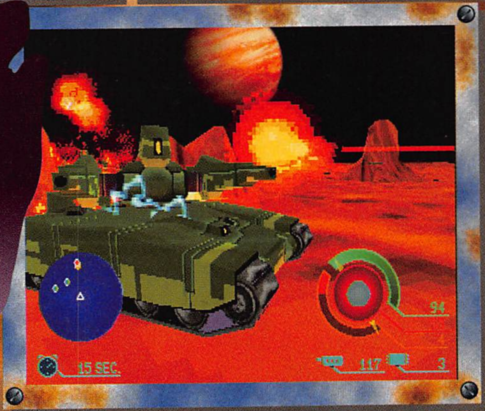






Carnage Heart





Carnage Heart is finally available in the US, coming our way thanks to SCEA. They've gone beyond a decent translation by including a giant strategy guide and an in depth tutorial disk with the game.

Given the amount of space I have to work with, I can only skim the surface of this cool mech strategy game—but I'll do my best. Carnage Heart includes three unique campaign scenarios (Europa, Ganymede, and Callisto), where you'll be guiding teams of mechs into battle.

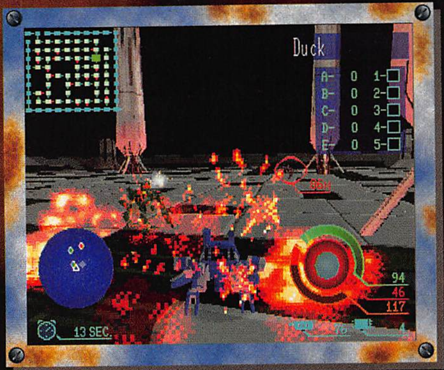
Hardware construction: Before engaging, you must set up and equip several home bases from which your mechanized troops (known as "Over Kill Engines") are dispatched. It is from within these fortresses that your armies are created, using multiple production lines, to literally manufacture robot hardware to your exacting specifications. Weapons, engines, armor, the shape, size, and color—every detail can be manipulated in the design of your OKE. You might assume the OKE ends here, with the construction of the outer shell and interior motor functions, but there's infinitely more to do.



Software programming: This is the fundamental action program of the OKE mech. The result of battles is predicated by the completeness of this software and the proficiency of behavior development. Yeah, I know, techno-babble can be lame, but you wouldn't believe how incredibly cool the software programming is. You actually lay down the CPU chip set on a table, and arrange sets of commands for processing during battle. This is beyond complex (I guarantee you'll be flipping through that tutorial a few times), but once understood, your OKEs will be performing amazing maneuvers mid-battle—all thanks to your ingenious programming.

The actual command system for construction/programming is beautiful, concealing a wickedly intricate set of parameters within a simple menu system (with full, glorious, PS mouse compatibility).

Based on what I've described so far, I think this game is well worth purchasing. I will tell you that the 3D engine used during battles is pretty good (20 fps or so), with no clipping, and light-sourcing constantly dances over the polygonal playfield as shots and explosions ignite the air. The sound effects are good, while the PCM music, played during the menu screens, is mostly horrible (oh well).



If you play mech-based strategy games, you'll never play one as detailed as *Carnage Heart*. The self-running battles may seem a little tedious, but once you realize battles are being waged using your precise tactical programming, your involvement and appreciation are secured. Highly recommended. *G*

REVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - ARTDINK	# OF PLAYERS - 1
PUBLISHER - SONY	DIFFICULTY - MANIA
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - NOW



GLITCH
Hmm, two PS simulations this month. *Vandal Carnage* and *Heart Hearts*... No, wait...

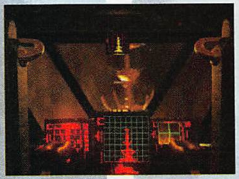
sentient



Psygnosis is known for taking risks with their games, and *Sentient* is no exception. *Sentient* is an interactive sci-fi 'soap opera' that goes way beyond the conventional. It's a corridor adventure game with an incredibly sophisticated character interaction system and some of the most realistic behavioral AI yet seen in a videogame. In truth it's an entirely new genre of game.



You play the part of Garrit, a medical technician sent from Earth to the ICARUS space station to investigate an outbreak of radiation sickness. As your transport arrives, a solar flare from the nearby sun erupts, causing you to crash land in the docking bay, bringing down the station's shields. You've got 10 minutes to get the shields back up before the next flare hits, and 15 minutes before the oxygen supply on your deck runs out! And that's just the start of your problems!



In *Sentient* there are six major plot scenarios that vary from game to game. These include trying to stop the spread of an unknown disease, and investigating a murder. Everything happens in real-time, with 60 different characters all going about their business in over 200 locations on the space station. Every decision or conversation you make leads you down a different path, and since there is no one fixed ending to the game, there are multiple ways to approach each situation.



The conversion system is the most flexible and comprehensive I've ever seen. When talking to another character the player is presented with a vast range of different phrases to say, and learning to assess and respond to a character's personality (i.e. being dominant with weaker characters) is as important as solving puzzles. Innovative is not the word!!



The graphics are sound are nothing to write home about (at the moment) but the game's unique concept and hugely involving storyline more than make up for any aesthetic inadequacies. I haven't seen a game this original for years, and if Psygnosis make good their promises for the final version, we could be looking at a whole new direction for adventure games. *K*

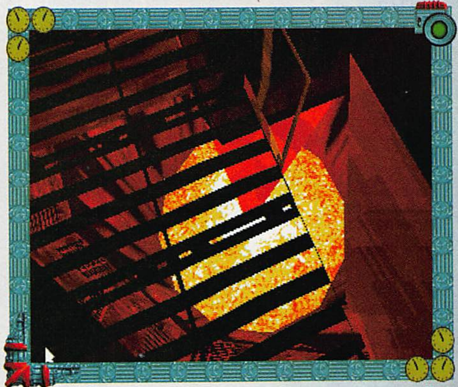




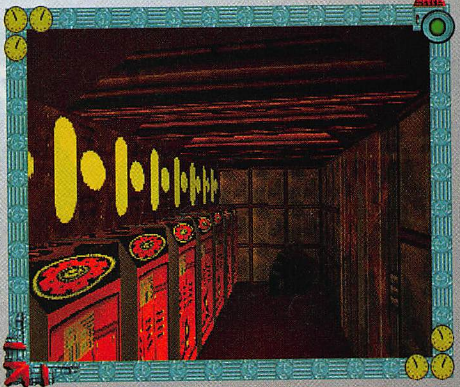


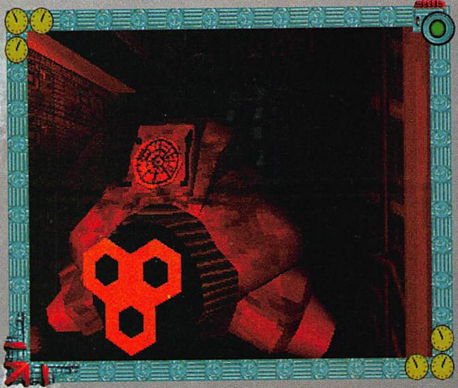












P PREVIEW

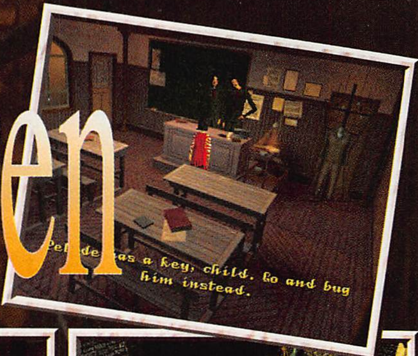
PlayStation

DEVELOPER - PSYGNOSIS	# OF PLAYERS - 1
PUBLISHER - PSYGNOSIS	DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - 2ND QTR. '97



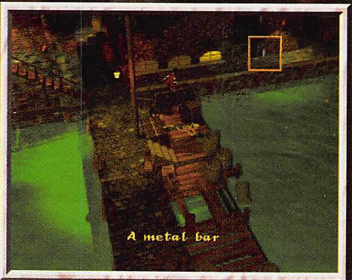
KNIGHTMARE
Innovative is not the word!

City of Lost Children











PREVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - PSYGNOSIS

PUBLISHER - PSYGNOSIS

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - N/A

AVAILABLE - 1ST QTR. '97



KNIGHTMARE
JEUNET and CARO would be proud!

City Of Lost Children must rank as one of the strangest choices for a movie-to-game translation ever (next to *Warlock*!). The French movie was a dark, surreal fantasy about an ominous city where children are being mysteriously abducted by a sinister force. It's hard to see how anyone could make a game out of such source material. Well, try telling that to Psygnosis. But what's really surprising is not that *CoLC* is one of the weirdest-movie to-game translations ever, but that it could turn out to be one of the best.

The game takes the form of a *Resident Evil*-style graphic adventure with polygon characters superimposed over CG-rendered backdrops. You play the part of Miette, a twelve-year-old orphan who is forced to steal for a living by her headmistress, Pieuvre. From what we've seen, the game follows the plot of the movie pretty closely, with Miette teaming up with Circus strongman One to investigate the disappearances after One's brother is abducted. It's an absorbing story, if a bizarre one, although its dark, unsettling overtones might not to be to everyone's tastes.

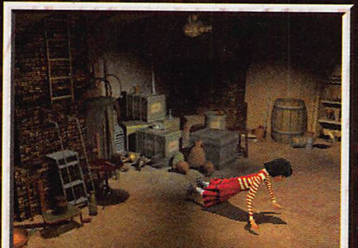


What should be should be to everyone's tastes, however, are the games aesthetics. *CoLC* graphics are way beyond anything seen in *Resident Evil*, and in some cases even go so far as to match the splendor of *Final Fantasy VII*. The polygon characters are detailed and superbly animated, while the backdrops are nothing short of spectacular. They perfectly recreate the hyper-real look of the movie and the polygon characters interact with them almost seamlessly. The awesome visuals combine with some super smooth FMV and an incredible eerie Dolby surround soundtrack to create one of the most atmospheric game environments I've ever experienced.





Miette controls a lot like Chris or Jill from *Resident Evil*, but without the weapon attack. She can duck, talk to other characters (*good* voice acting for a change) pick up and use items, run, and even change the camera angle at certain points (how many times would you liked to have done *that* in *Resident Evil*). It's tough to make any judgment calls yet, but from what we've seen so far *City of Lost Children* could well give *Resident Evil 2* a run for its money when it's released later this year. We'll keep you posted. *K*









VANDAL HEARTS™





I'm shocked. Out of nowhere, the PS has become the system of choice for RPGs in America. Thanks to titles like Konami's ultra-hot *Suikoden*, the genre has re-affirmed its popularity. *Vandal Hearts* is their next project, and after days and days of playing, I can vouch for the quality of this translation.

I play strategy RPGs religiously, and *Vandal Hearts* is one of the best ever. You know how it is with this genre—the biggest complaint is always,"there's way too much fighting". You move a little, fight, move a little further, fight, etc., etc., and it takes forever to get into the game. Unless the story is great, and the battle system is simple and intuitive, many people find it difficult to stay interested. Thankfully, the writing in *Vandal Hearts* is superb, guiding the plot through layer after layer of romance, betrayal, intrigue, death, and vengeance. Interaction between characters is especially well done; there's no lame humor, and no weak or generic character speech to be found.

The battle system is like a mix of *Shining Force* and *Tactics Ogre*, with movement ratios, attack sequences, and multi-level fighting. You can use the L and R buttons to swing the camera around during battle, which is cool,













because everything's happening on a 3D playfield. These polygonal battlefields are multi-layered, well-textured, and always demand new strategies. For example, a pesky archer might be positioned high atop a ledge, and should he fire down on you, the arrow will take off a considerable amount of life (more than a ground to ground attack), so keep track of those punks! The troops, good *and* evil, are detailed little sprites that attack, counter-attack (it's automatic, after you accept a blow), and wield spectacular magic. Battles, overall, are a joy to watch and play.

If there's one problem with *VH*, it would be the music. Three composers worked on the game, and although the PCM tunes are varied, only a handful of good tracks exist, while the others range from grating to average.

Strategy fans, listen-up: *Vandal Hearts* will be ready this March (yes!), it's one of the most enjoyable games in the genre, and the translation is perfect. Don't even think about letting this one slip by. I'll be back to dissect *Vandal Hearts* next month. *G*







P PREVIEW — PlayStation

DEVELOPER - KONAMI	# OF PLAYERS - 1
PUBLISHER - KONAMI	DIFFICULTY - MODERATE
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - MARCH



GLITCH
Konami is on a roll! I want more!

RALLY CROSS









As far reaching as the PlayStation's game library is, it has, up until this point, been lacking a good rally racer. Sega, of course, has probably one of the finest examples of the genre in its wondrous *Sega Rally* conversion on Saturn. Sony Interactive's *Rally Cross* takes a slightly different approach to this popular road racing style.

For one, this game is not about speed. Because of the violent, undulating nature of the track, staying on all four wheels is at least as important as going fast. Heaven forbid you should end up on your roof, trying frantically to get upright again. Memorization of the track is mandatory or you'll be upside down half the time. You race against only three other competitors, but believe me, dealing with the track is quite enough. Speaking of tracks, they range from desert, to snow, to an abandoned mine tunnel. Initially, you are allowed to choose from just three tracks, but once you've beaten the rookie and veteran levels, a further three tracks are opened up. And not only are there multiple paths on each track, there are also three slightly different layouts for each, as other routes are opened up as you move up the ranks. This adds nicely to the replay value.




The graphics serve the game quite well. The texture maps are smooth and detailed, with each car leaving a great little dust trail in its wake. The aesthetic of rally racing has been captured quite well, with these neat looking hatchbacks careening around corners. You can even make out spectators trackside snapping their cameras. And though there is a hint of pop-up (which may very well be corrected), the track layout hides it pretty well.

But what impresses more than the graphics are the sound effects. The creaking, mechanical, ker-chunks of your car being thrown around the track are great, as are the environmental effects, such as crowd cheering, water splashing, falling rocks, and even jungle sounds.




Look for a full review in an upcoming issue. From what we've seen, *Rally Cross* looks extremely promising. If Sony Interactive can tighten up the (somewhat) sluggish controls a bit, they just might have something here. ***SD***

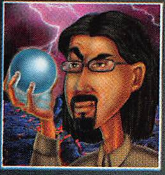


P PREVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - SONY
PUBLISHER - SONY
FORMAT - CD

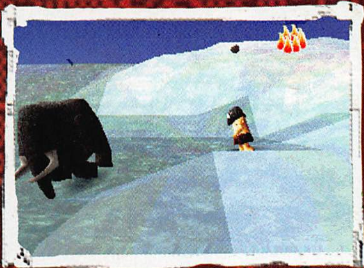
OF PLAYERS - 1-4
DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
AVAILABLE - APRIL '97

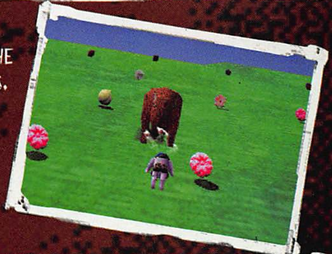


SUBSTANCE D ME? IN THE MUD? YOU'VE *GOT* TO BE KIDDING!



HOW COOL IS SONY? HOW MUCH DO THEY LOVE US GAMERS? WELL, BY RELEASING TALE OF THE SUN, I'D HAVE TO SAY QUITE A BIT. IN AN ULTRA-'90S EFFORT TO MAKE THE PS A TRULY UNIVERSAL SYSTEM THEY ARE DOING WHAT FEW COMPANIES EVER DO: RELEASING A GAME THAT IS WELL, IT'S HARD TO EXPLAIN. I GUESS IT'S A CAVEMAN SIM. IT'S DEFINITELY NOT MAINSTREAM. IN TOTS YOU MERELY LIVE AND EVOLVE. THERE ARE NO INSTRUCTIONS. GO OUT AND EXPLORE THE WORLD AND WHEN YOU GET A KILL RETURN HOME AND FEED THE TRIBE OR JUST KEEP GOING. IT'S A BIG WORLD. AS YOU PROGRESS YOUR LUNGS, LEGS, BRAIN, ETC. EITHER GROW OR DIMINISH DEPENDING ON HOW WELL YOU LIVE. WEAPONS CAN ALSO BE EARNED AND UPGRADED AS YOU EVOLVE. IN MY OPINION TOTS IS THE SINGLE BEST CREATION TYPE GAME AVAILABLE TODAY. YOU'LL PRACTICALLY FALL DOWN LAUGHING AT TIMES. THE GOAL IS TO BUILD A TOWER OF MAMMOTH TUSKS TO REACH THE SUN... AND THEN, WELL, TUNE IN WHEN WE REVIEW TOTS IN A FUTURE ISSUE OR DIG OUT ISSUE 7, VOLUME 4 AND READ THE REVIEW I DID ON THE IMPORT.














TALE OF THE SUN: WILD, PURE, SIMPLE, LIFE... GO AHEAD, LIVE A LITTLE!

P PREVIEW | PlayStation

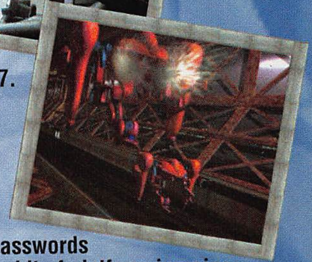
DEVELOPER - ARTDINK	# OF PLAYERS - 1
PUBLISHER - SONY	DIFFICULTY - ?
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - MARCH!



E. STORM Play it-love it-live it. The best caveman sim of the millennium!





Joining the ranks of *Doom*-inspired corridor games comes the Japanese-flavored *Beltlogger 9*, developed by Genki. Look for a stateside release from Jaleco in the second quarter of '97.

I won't go into the story (which is very nicely illustrated in the intro), but rest assured that only the fate of humanity rests in your hands. So there you are, strapped in your mech, walking the corridors of *Beltlogger 9* taking out any and all polygonal enemies who stand in your way.

The level layouts are quite nice and are one of the main draws of the game. There are a good number of vertical elements as you drop down long shafts and look up to see platforms and pathways overhead. The puzzle elements are also nicely done, with passwords that need to be entered, along with the usual switch finding. There's even a bit of platform jumping thrown in for good measure. Thankfully, the controls are logical and smooth, with strafing and looking up and down handled painlessly.

You have your usual assortment of weapons, from lasers to the all-destroying BOM, which can kill you if you don't split right after shooting it. For the U.S. release, Jaleco has a few changes in store. For one, new enemies will be added with more difficult AI. Obviously, the Japanese will need to be translated, and Jaleco is taking steps to ensure accurate and well-acted voice-overs. Fans of corridor games, and especially mech flavored corridor games will have a good time with *Beltlogger 9*. **SD**



P PREVIEW | PlayStation

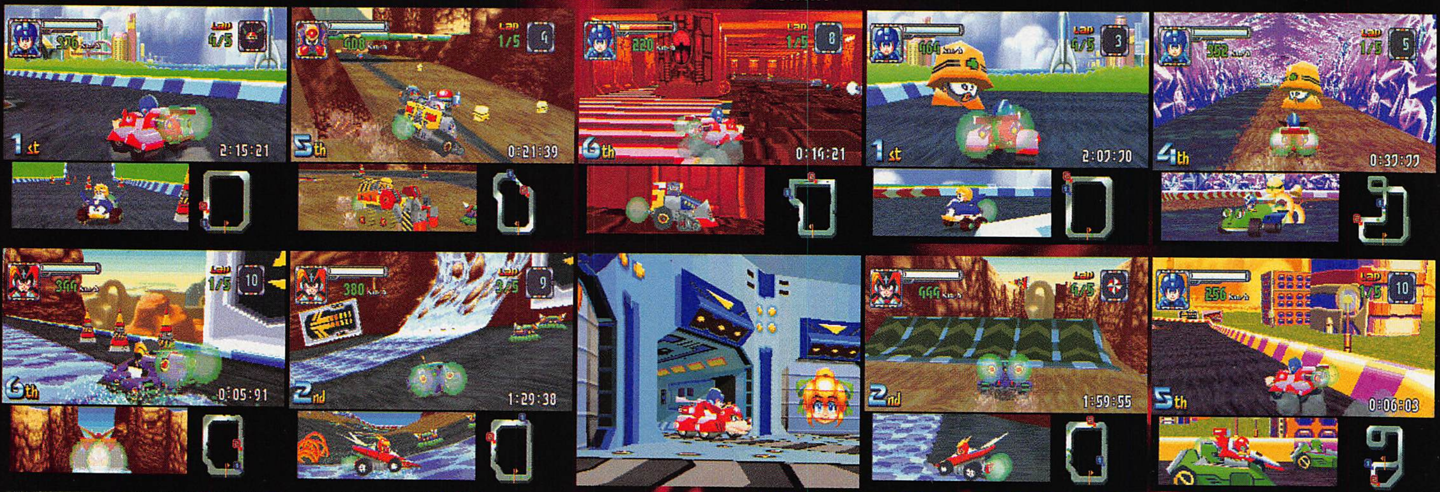
DEVELOPER - GENKI	# OF PLAYERS - 1
PUBLISHER - JALECO	DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - MARCH

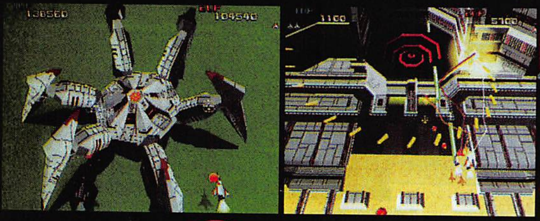


SUBSTANCE-D Looking into my orb, I see a unique corridor game in your future.

PREVIEWS PLAYSTATION NATION

Ever wonder what Mario Kart would be like if it were based on *MegaMan*? Probably not, but Capcom did, and here it is. *MegaMan Racing* puts you in control of MegaMan and his pals in this super fun battle-racer. The course design is straight outta the Mega-Manual, and the gameplay (though still early) seems to be on the right,uh,track. We'll have more *MMR* next month.





Namco is readying both *Xevious 3D* and *Time Crisis* for the PS. *Time Crisis* features new levels while *Xevious* features full-on texture mapping and new play mechanics. Both look stunning on screen. We'll have lots more on both games in the very near future.





Complete with new characters and projectiles, 60fps animation and an all new Quest mode, *Tobal No. 2* is soon to be released in Japan.

Still no word on a US date, but we'll keep you posted.

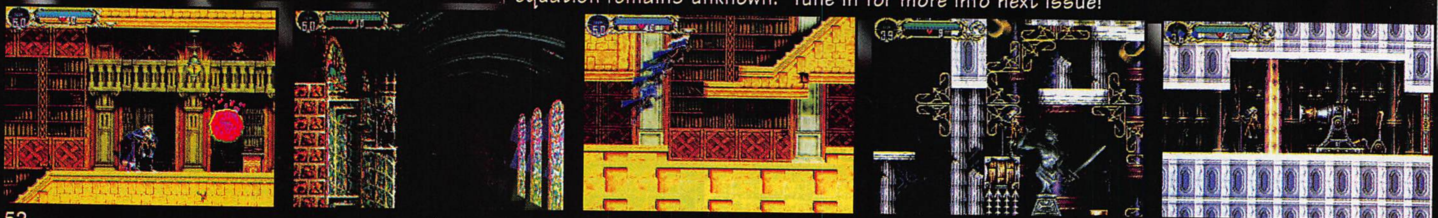




DRACULA X-SYMPHONY OF THE NIGHT



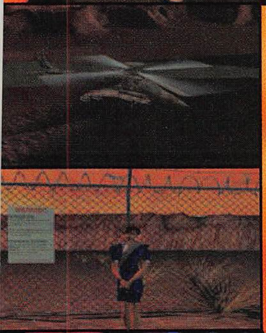
And here lies the game on the very top of my most wanted—no, make that the I've-GOT-to-have-it list. I've been dying for a 32-bit hand drawn *Castlevania* since both the PS and SS were announced. March 14th is the firm Japanese release date and Konami tells us that a US version should be no more than three months behind. You play Alucard (Dracula spelled backwards), the son of Dracula. Alucard is fighting his legacy and is torn between the dark and the light. Like *CV2*, by earning money you can upgrade your weapons and armor at shops. You also gain experience points by killing enemies in *DX* and level-up RPG style! Alucard can turn to mist or a bat as well, to get out of certain situations. The gameplay, of course, is pure *Castlevania* only now you can do special moves via fighting-game-style commands. There are even banks in *DX*, where you can drop off jewels or exchange them for gold. *DX* is sure to be a game to remember as have been all the *Castlevania* adventures. Where the Belmonts fit into the equation remains unknown. Tune in for more info next issue!

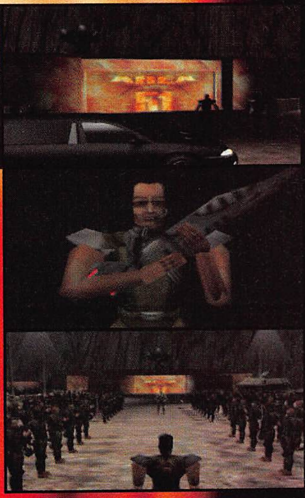












BROKEN HELIX

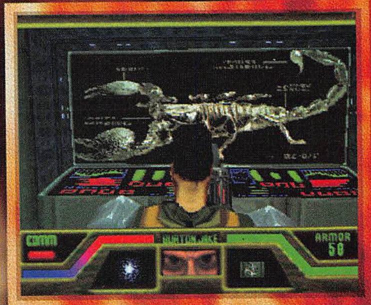
We previewed *Broken Helix* a couple of months ago, but since then it's come on in leaps and bounds. In this latest beta (about 70%) Konami's concept of a real-time, story-driven, corridor adventure is really starting to take shape.

You play the part of Jake, a bomb disposal expert in the year 2026 who is called in to diffuse two explosive charges planted by a rogue scientist inside a top secret military bunker called Area 51. You are accompanied by a crack military squad headed up by the fearsome Black Dawn, an Arnold Schwarzenegger look (and sound) alike whose intentions are unknown. After locating and defusing the bombs, an energy shield locks down the bunker, and the marine team starts sweeping through the complex, destroying everything and killing everyone they come across—including you! Your mission is to find out just what the hell is going on and what it all has to do with a top secret project called *Broken Helix*...

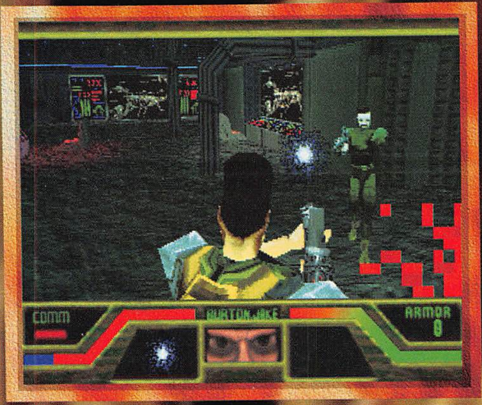
The game plays like a standard corridor shooter (look up and down, strafe, jump, crawl) just with a simple item interface and the ability to talk to other characters. The voice acting is the best I've ever heard in a videogame—amusing and totally in character—with Bruce Campbell himself taking the role of Jake and sounding for all the world like a futuristic Ash (of *Evil Dead* fame). This adds a huge extra dimension to the game and Konami is to be commended on such inspired casting.

But what really impresses is the way everything in the game happens in real-time. You have a certain amount of time in which to find and defuse the bombs (without getting seen by the security cameras) after which the marine team starts sweeping through the levels in order. Everything happens by the clock, and by replaying and doing different things at different times you can effect the outcome of the game. There are a number of different paths the story can take depending on your actions, and all of them are cool.









The graphics engine is looking good, with impressive light sourcing and a smooth frame rate, and the game features a number of small innovative touches that really add to the experience, such as controllable droids, interactive computer panels and the ability to change Jake's disposition (from normal to angry). *Broken Helix* is really shaping up to be something special, and fingers crossed, we'll bring you a full review next issue. **K**







P PREVIEW

PlayStation

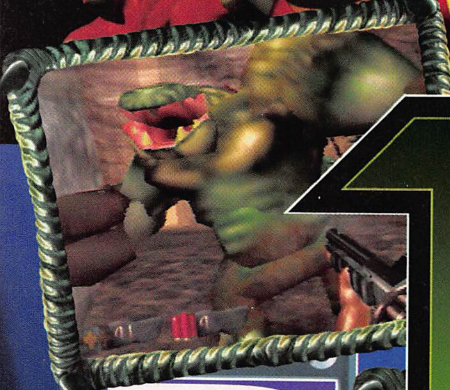
- DEVELOPER - KONAMI
- PUBLISHER - KONAMI
- FORMAT - CD
- # OF PLAYERS - 1
- DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
- AVAILABLE - MARCH



KNIGHTMARE
A HOT CORRIDOR GAME... WITH A STORY!



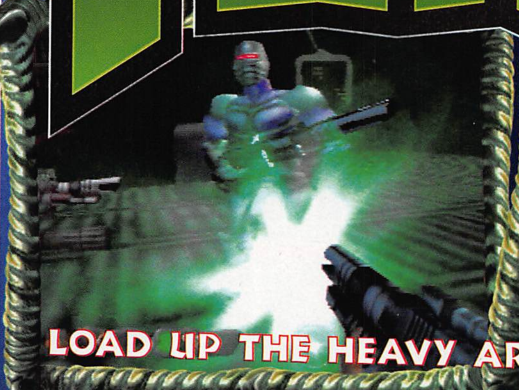
TUROK



REVIEW

NINTENDO 64

- DEVELOPER - IGUANA
- PUBLISHER - ACCLAIM
- FORMAT - CART
- # OF PLAYERS - 1
- DIFFICULTY - MEDIUM
- AVAILABLE - NOW

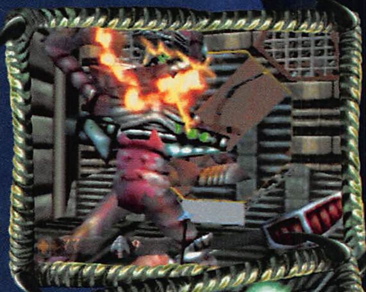




LOAD UP THE HEAVY ARTILLERY! TIME FOR SOME 64-BIT STYLE DINO-HUNTING!

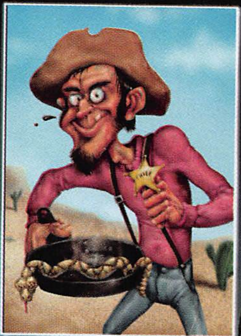
I've had to be surgically removed from my N64 pad. The reason? Well, I've just clocked up over 30 hours play on the finest 3D corridor game ever to grace a console. Yes, I'd been waiting for *Turok* for a long, long time, desperately wanting to believe (and perhaps creating some of) the hype. Then the day of joy. I plugged in the cartridge and I'm still not properly sane after this unbelievable playing experience.





I can't even begin to enthuse enough about this title, so instead I'll cover the major accomplishments which blew me so far away I'm still in freefall. Firstly, those graphics. Yeah, there's fog (N64's version of 'pop-up'), but this keeps the frame rate up to an almost-





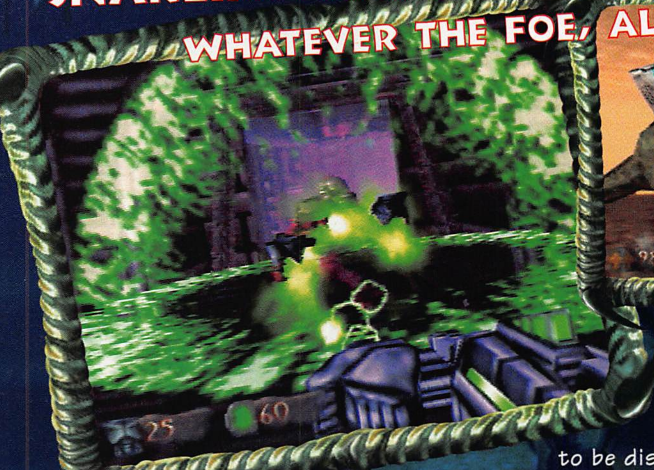
CHIEF HAMBLETON
The lizard crew set a new standard! This is one Turoking game!







SNARLING RAPTOR OR THUNDERING TRICERATOPS WHATEVER THE FOE, ALL MUST BE GUNNED DOWN WITH HASTE!





constant 30 fps (yes, even when there's five enemies on screen at once, non-believers) and enables truly scary amounts of detail to be displayed on all the enemies you face. From the lowly spearman to the phenomenal Triceratops riders, every single enemy looks real enough to be in a 32-bit rendered intro, and moves with stunning realism.



Look up and you'll see rolling clouds (which you actually ascend to) and breath-taking lens flare from the sun. Look directly into the sun and the screen turns white. Of course, you won't have time to marvel at how real everything looks; you'll be perfecting the Training mode before launching into the most epic slaughter you've ever witnessed. Finally, you'll never be anything less than utterly amazed by the floor, wall and sky textures. Everything is texture-mapped to absolute perfection.

Control is initially bewildering as Turok himself can run, jump, look all about him and strafe like a madman. Half an hour later, you'll be gawking at just how well your hunting skills have

SHAMAN VERSES CYBORG RAPTOR! BRING IT ON!!






developed, and you'll discover that the 3D stick and various other buttons make for the perfect control system. There is no other game which responds as exactly as *Turok*; pure heaven for any 3D corridor junkie.

The monsters you face are the most spectacular ever faced in any video game ever. Yes, really. There's raptors (I did mention that they move with pantaloon-soiling realism, didn't I?), solders, shamans which fire flaming skulls, gorilla lizards, leaping monkey reptiles, even ED-209-style robots (with or without rocket launchers) and many more creatures which only appear very rarely (such as the sewer crabs). What's even more stunning is that the monsters become more cyborg than flesh the further into the game




NATIVE SPEARMAN! TASTE MY BLADE!!









A COLOSSAL CYBORG T-REX!!

THE GRANDMOTHER OF ALL BOSSES!






you progress (the raptors eventually become bio-mechanical beasts with pulse rifles!), and the final level sees robots replacing the usual natives or soldiers. Of course, there's at least three different death animations for each monster and that's just the tip of the iceberg... I must just tell you what happens when you defeat a Triceratops; the beast collapses onto its side and squashes the rider (cue a chilling blood-curdling scream). Also, every time you approach a particular soldier, he'll have a different texture-mapped face (from a choice of 12). Unbelievable.

Level design is first-rate. Only eight main levels, but each one takes upwards of three hours of constant playing to complete, and finding everything (keys to unlock further levels, plus pieces of the Chronoscepter) will keep you occupied for weeks. Despite completing the game, I'm still horribly addicted; to such an extent that I start to salivate and twitch at the mere mention of the word 'Tyrannosaurus'... The cunning placement of weapons, secrets (over the edges





A FLAILING MANTIS AND SEWER CRABS!

THIS AIN'T NO ORDINARY LIZARD HUNT!



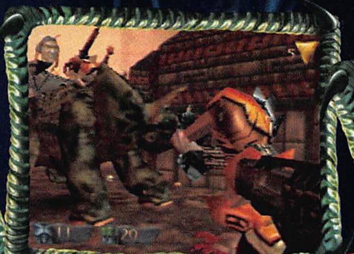
TUROK

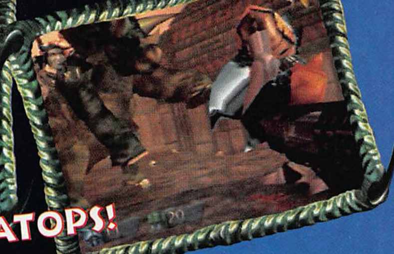


of cliffs, requiring amazing but never impossible leaps to find) keys and items keeps the game moving along at a pace somewhere between frantic and nail-bitingly tense, but you'll always be in ecstatic delight, rounding every corner, peering into the mist and readying yourself for



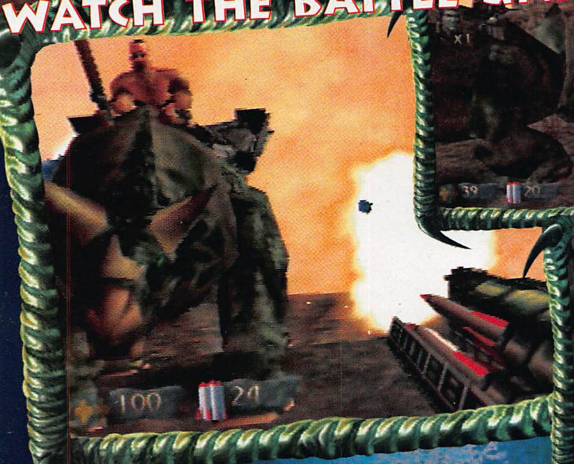






TWO TONS OF ROBOT AND TEN TONS OF TRICERATOPS!

WATCH THE BATTLE UNFOLD!!





the carnage that lies ahead...

Music is perfection, considering the shortfall of the N64's sound capabilities. Jungle tom-toms, inhuman screeches and different effects depending on your situation just add to the heart-stopping tension. The last level has hideously addictive and tense music; enough to drive you insane. Couple this with varying pitch for every yell, screech and scream, and you're on your way to realizing the power Iguana has begun to unlock in this console.

I must also mention weapons. These are real;

ONE IN THE NECK FOR LIZARD BOY!!

ARTERIAL SPRAY TIME!



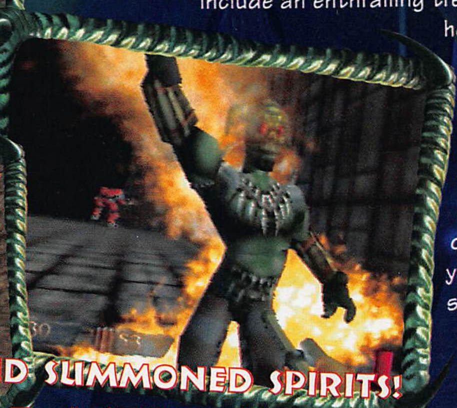


you'll look at your TV and say "That's Jesse Ventura's mini-gun from *Predator*." Yes, really. Each of the pieces of killing ordnance bobs up and down with photographic realism. I don't know how they managed to get those weapons to look and perform as well as they did, but every piece of hardware moves like you'd expect in real life. I'm not even going to approach the subject of the alien weapons. Let's just say these are the most spectacular and gobsmackingly massacre-inducing ever. Better than anything you've seen before. Including *Quake*.

Sega and Sony; start shaking in your boots. This is so far removed from 32-bit gaming that it's not even funny anymore. Turok is so good-looking that I can't face returning to pixelated polygons. Fortunately, Iguana has had the ability to include an enthralling trek to 64-bit hell and back, a festival of hardcore 3D corridor gaming and the best one-player experience on any console. Lock yourself in your room, crank up the stereo sound and prepare yourself for the future of video-gaming... **CH**











SANDWORMS AND SUMMONED SPIRITS!

UNBELIEVABLE ACTION!!



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PLAY IT WITH THE LIGHTS DOWN AND THE VOLUME UP!

DOOM 64



THE PERPETUALLY-PERILED MARINE IS BACK!!!



How many games do you consider to be truly revolutionary? Games that create or re-define an entire genre? Games so innovative that they set a new standard of excellence and change the way you look at gaming forever. For me, such games can be counted on two hands. And one of those fingers belongs to Doom.

When Doom debuted for the PC in 1993, it wasn't just the technical accomplishment that amazed me. Sure, it looked impressive, but it was more than that. The breakthrough visuals were simply a means by which id software could transform the raw, instinctive gameplay of Wolfenstein 3D into a living, breathing, experience. For the first time ever I forgot I was playing a game and *became* that Space Marine--creeping down a flickering alien corridor, wounded, low on ammo and not knowing where, or what, that growling was coming from. Doom was a landmark title and single-handedly paved the way for the corridor genre as we know it. Respect is due.



Since then, Doom has appeared on pretty much every home platform that could handle it, and some that couldn't. There have been numerous sequels and updates, thousands of new levels, and a spate of clones that have only recently managed to dethrone Doom from its long reign as king of corridor shooters. But now all that's set to change. You thought Final Doom was the final Doom? Ha! You thought wrong. Doom is back on the N64, and this time it means business...





A CAST OF THOUSANDS!!!





REVIEW

NINTENDO 64

DEVELOPER - WILLIAMS

PUBLISHER - MIDWAY

FORMAT - 64 MB CARTRIDGE

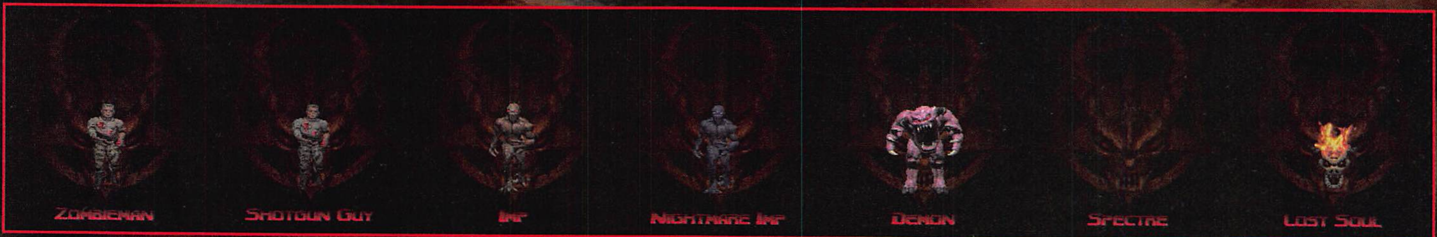
OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - ADVANCED

AVAILABLE - MARCH



KNIGHTMARE
The Big Daddy of corridor shooters still rocks!







Ok, first the bad news. This is Doom. Anyone expecting Doom 3 is in for a big disappointment. There's no looking up and down, no jumping, no crouching, no climbing steps taller than ankle height, the infamous auto-aiming and poorly animated 2D scaling enemies that can only be viewed from eight directions! The control and gameplay is *exactly* the same as it was with original Doom on PC all those years ago with only very slight changes. Simple is not the word.

Now the good news. This is *Doom*! The control and gameplay have been left simple for a reason, and a damn good one at that--action! Like Tenka on PS, Doom isn't about exploration. Sure, there are some stunning-looking environments in there, but they serve as little more then a backdrop for the carnage--picturesque battlefields if you will. Doom is a shoot-'em-up, pure and simple. The control interface was designed to be as straightforward as possible because you're not supposed to worry about things like jumping and looking. You're supposed to worry about the 40 or so Imps that just came tearing through that door in front of you. So after getting over the initial limitations of the control (it took one level), I settled back down into the rhythm of Doom.









And do you know what? Doom still rocks! Now I'm the first person (bad pun, I know) to lament the lack of improvements in the game, but you have to look at it as an equation. You can add all kinds of stuff to the control, but somewhere along the line those additions are going to compromise the pace of the gameplay. By keeping things simple, the player can master the controls a lot quicker, and the game can chuck out even greater challenges. It only takes a few hours play to slip into the Zen of Doom, wherein the control is so intuitive that you find yourself ripping through levels in record time, destroying hordes of creatures in the blink of an eye. The gameplay in Doom 64 is pure, unadulterated search-and-destroy nirvana, and believe me people, it doesn't get any better than this. The only slight downer is that the N64 controller which, while perfect for analog turning (like a PC mouse), makes it tough to run in a straight line! Practice is the key.









Of course, it doesn't hurt that Doom 64 is running on the most powerful home console currently available. Aesthetically, Doom 64 is a huge leap over both PS and PC Doom, not to mention every other corridor game that isn't Turok. The action runs at a consistently smooth 30 fps, no matter what's on screen, and it's only when you find yourself swarmed by 40 enemies at once (as opposed to Turok's 3) with no slow-down that you realize the benefit of having sprite-based enemies



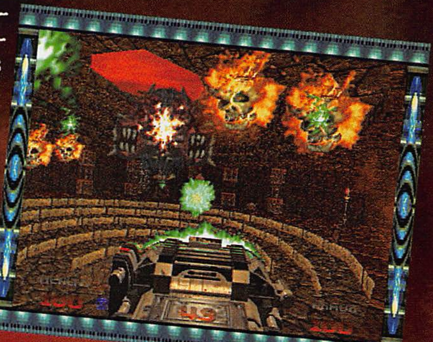












instead of polygons. The N64's hardware anti-aliasing eradicates the blocky textures and sprites commonly associated with the genre, while the N64's much-maligned sound chip blasts out bassy samples and some frankly stunning environmental sounds. Plug this into your stereo, pump up the bass and prepare to be amazed. The 're-designed' look is, for the most part, a good thing, even if some of the enemies do seem a bit 'cuddlier' than before.



There's over 30 levels of intense blasting action to enjoy, and each and every one is a work of design art. I've played literally thousands of Doom WADS over the years, and I'm not kidding when I say that these are among the best I've ever seen--and that includes id's own. Veteran Doom players may notice the odd homage here and there (Even Simpler than Dead Simple!?!) but everyone will appreciate the cunning traps and abundant hidden secrets. There's even some hybrid 3D design in there (bridges and rooms above rooms) though the moment you try to jump over a monster's head the age old 2D collision detection rears its ugly head. In fact, the only problem with these levels is that they're so well designed that you can't help but think how cool they would be in DeathMatch.





And that, for me, is the biggest disappointment--no multiplayer mode. Doom survived for so long purely on the basis of its DeathMatch, and without it, the game feels incomplete. I know Williams argued that a split-screen two player mode would ruin the point (you can see where the other person is), but I say, to hell with it. If you can do it, do it! Throw it in there and let us decide. At the very least it would make for some awesome co-operative battles on the highest difficulty setting! Even if the frame rate was cut in half it would still be smoother then Saturn Doom! The only other real disappointment is the lack of monsters. MIA from Doom 2 are the Chaingun dude, the Revenant, the Spider Mastermind and the Arch Vile--four of the coolest monsters in the Doom universe. Oh, well.







Despite these setbacks, Doom 64 re-awakened all those feelings that I felt playing the PC original four years ago. It's the best (single player) version of Doom yet, not to mention one of the best console corridor games out there. If you're a Doom fan, you'll appreciate the breathtaking level design and immense challenge that Doom 64 poses on the highest difficulty setting. If you're not a Doom fan well then wake up, dammit, you should be. It may not be as beautiful as Turok, or as intelligent as PowerSlave, but play it loud, with the lights low, and I guarantee you'll feel the fear like never before! Another notch in Williams belt. Nice job, guys! **K**

















TITLE	CHAMELEON TWIST
COMPANY	JPN. SYSTEM SUPPLY
ETA	JPN.-NOVEMBER
GENRE	3D ACTION/ADVENTURE



Chameleon TWIST

AN ODD LAD INDEED. OUR HERO USES HIS TONGUE TO GET AROUND! CHAMELEON TWIST WILL SURELY COME TO THE STATES... SOMEDAY.



TITLE	MOTHER 3
COMPANY	NINTENDO
ETA	FIRST QTR '98
GENRE	ACTION/RPG

M3 IS THE 2ND 64 DD GAME AND IT LOOKS STUNNING!

TITLE	YOSHI'S ISLAND
COMPANY	NINTENDO
ETA	JPN. SPRING-US SUMMER
GENRE	ACTION/PLATFORM

THE 1ST 2D GAME FOR THE N64 LOOKS TOO GOOD FOR WORDS. WE'LL KEEP THE SHOTS COMING!



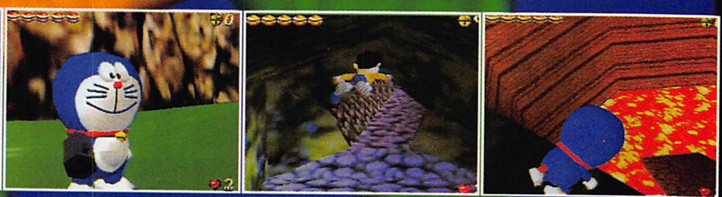


TITLE	SONIC WINGS SPCL.
COMPANY	VIDEO SYSTEM
ETA	2ND QTR. JPN.
GENRE	SHOOTING

SWS GOES 3D! FIND OUT MORE IN THE MONTHS AHEAD.





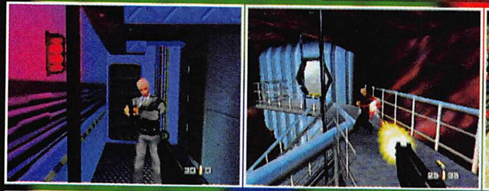


TITLE	ETALE
COMPANY	IMAGINEER
ETA	JPN.-SPRING
GENRE	ACTION/RPG

IMAGINEER'S BEEN BUSY LATELY WITH 3 N64 GAME'S IN DEVELOPMENT. ETALE WILL COME TO THE US BY T•HQ THIS YEAR!

TITLE	DORAEMON
COMPANY	EPOCH
ETA	JPN.-MARCH
GENRE	3D ACTION ADVENTURE

JAPAN'S VERSION OF GARFIELD RETURNS AGAIN. HIS N64 DEBUT SETS HIM AND HIS HUMAN PALS IN A MARIO-ESQUE ADVENTURE.







TITLE	GOLDENEYE
COMPANY	RARE/NINTENDO
ETA	2ND QTR.-US
GENRE	3D CORRIDOR

WHAT CAN I SAY, IT'S RARE! GE WILL SURELY AMAZE!

TITLE	MULTI RACING CHAMP.
COMPANY	IMAGINEER
ETA	JPN.-JUNE
GENRE	RACING

T•HQ WILL BRING US THIS FINE RACER TO THE STATES!

TITLE	REV LIMIT
COMPANY	SETA
ETA	JPN.-MARCH
GENRE	RACING

THE 1ST 3RD PARTY N64 RACER LOOKS AWESOME!





IT'S THE GAME THE WHOLE WORLD IS WAITING TO SEE, ZELDA 64. WILL THE 64DD BE EVERYTHING WE HOPE IT TO BE? CAN LINK SURVIVE THE TRANSITION TO 3D? THOSE QUESTIONS AND MORE WILL BE ANSWERED THIS SUMMER IN JAPAN AND JUST A FEW MONTHS LATER HERE IN THE STATES. SO FAR THE GAME IS LOOKING NOTHING SHORT OF SPECTACULAR EVEN IN THESE EARLY SHOTS. WE LEARNED FROM VIEWING EARLY MARIO SCREENS THAT THE FINAL PRODUCT WILL LOOK QUITE A BIT BETTER, SO LOOK FOR UPDATES RIGHT HERE AS THE GAME PROGRESSES. ALSO BEAR IN MIND THAT THESE SHOTS ARE 2ND GENERATION, I.E. LOW-RES & FUZZY.

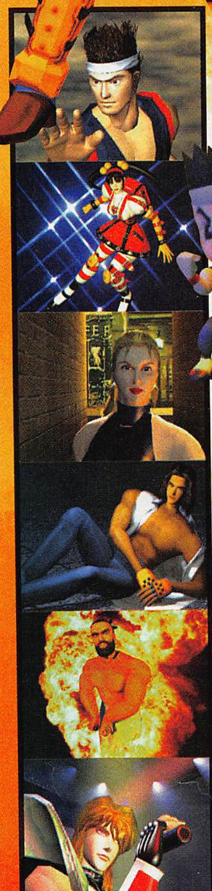
TITLE	ZELDA 64
COMPANY	NINTENDO
ETA	SUMMER-JPN.
GENRE	ACTION/RPG





SATURN SECTOR

FIGHTERS MEGAMIX



Fighters MegaMix comes as something of a surprise. Surprising because it's not like Sega to do this kind of thing, surprising because up until three months ago no-one even knew it existed, but most of all, surprising because it exceeds all expectations. *VF3* is my favorite 3D beat-'em-up of all time, and *Fighting Vipers* is my third (after *Tekken 2*). So you can imagine how excited I got at the prospect of a *FV/VF* team-up. My only concern was how AM2 would balance *VF2*'s precision mechanics with *FV*'s lightning paced 'PPK' gameplay, but of course, I needn't have worried. AM2 had no intention of compromising either game style, and their solution is something that fans of both games are going to be happy with. And then some.

THE WEIRDEST COLLECTION OF FIGHTERS IN ANY GAME!!!

Fire up the disk and you're greeted with a cool, full-screen, rendered intro, depicting both the Vipers and the Virtua Fighters getting ready for battle. The character models are the same ones Sega used for the *VF3* promo video and the quality really rubs off here. It's not gonna worry Namco or anything, but it's still pretty cool.

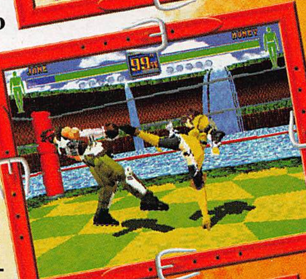


Hit start and you're presented with a title screen offering every mode of play you could possibly ask for in a fighting game: arcade, versus, survival, team battle and training. Versus, survival and team battle are all pretty self-explanatory, while the training mode is similar to the one featured in *FV* (i.e. a full moves list and a dummy to perform them on).



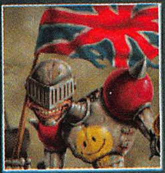
The arcade mode offers a selection of nine different theme-based 'paths' to choose from, each incorporating six characters and a secret boss. There's Novice, Virtua Fighters, Fighting Vipers, Girls, Muscle







R REVIEW	SEGA SATURN
DEVELOPER - AM2	# OF PLAYERS - 1-2
PUBLISHER - SEGA	DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - MARCH '97



KNIGHTMARE
Fighting from the gods!



HIDDEN CHARACTERS

1&2: Kids Akira & Sarah. In the VF Kids intro we saw them beating up their 'parents.' Now it's time to take revenge on the little upstarts...









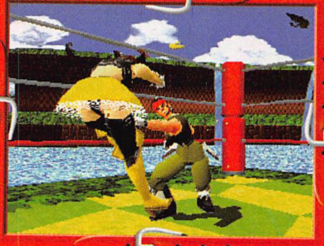
Men, Smart Guys, Bosses, Dirty Fighters and Secret Characters. Beat a path and the secret boss character for that path is added to your character select screen. There are 34 characters that we know of so far: 11 Virtua Fighters, 11 Fighting Vipers and 12 secret (see side panels), although it's possible that there are even more!

Enter the options screen and you'll discover *Fighters MegaMix*'s first major revelation: You can choose between *Virtua Fighter* mode and *Fighting Vipers* mode! In *VF* mode the game plays like *VF*, or more specifically, *VF3*, with longer recovery delays on certain moves, more realistic physics, the 3D 'escape' button and more than 50% of *VF3*'s new moves, including wall throws! This is a completely unexpected turn up for the books, and a real bonus or *VF3* fans.



3: A darker, meaner Bahn with his own background and a few new moves. 4: Janet plays just like Aoi from VF3 and has a mega damaging gun attack!







In *Vipers* mode, the game plays like (funnily enough), with easy PPK-derivative combos, air recoveries and armor-breaking power moves. Some of the *VF* characters' moves (such as Akira's shoulder barge) have armor-breaking properties and the *VF*'ers can string together combos that wouldn't normally be possible in *VF* mode. Personally, I prefer to use the native mode of whichever character I'm playing (i.e. *FV* mode for a *FV* character), but it's nice to be able to experiment.

Start a game and you'll discover *Fighters MegaMix*'s second revelation: the graphics. Even though the fighters aren't as hi-res as *VF2*, this is a vast improvement over the *Fighting Vipers* engine. The polygons are cleaner, the fighters are more detailed and the animation is second to none. Everything runs at an ultra-smooth 60 fps, and the gouraud shading and lighting effects are highly impressive—







5&6: Believe it or not, it's Bean and Bark from Sonic The Fighters! Bean is the duck with bombs, and Bark is the polar bear (of sorts...).



















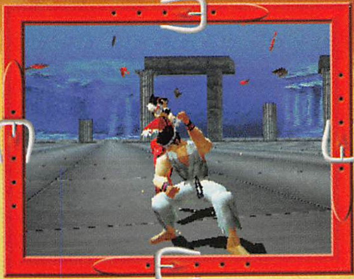




7: Rentahero, the old Genesis AM2 RPG character makes an appearance.
8: Deku looks like a giant jumping bean to me, but I can't quite be sure.







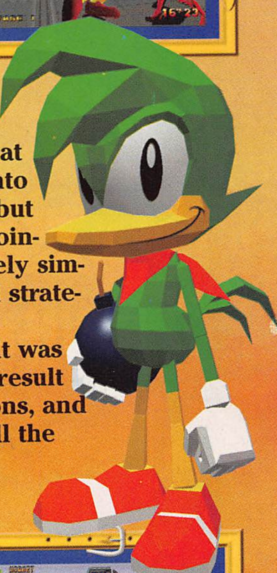
even more so than *FV*. Unfortunately, like *FV* there is occasional slow down on some of the walled arenas, but it's rare and doesn't affect the gameplay. Every character has their own hi-res parallax 2D backdrop and red-book audio track, and Sega fans will appreciate a lot of the in-jokes (e.g. the Hornet's background is the seven speedway track from Daytona!). Overall, even though the aesthetics aren't as impressive as something like PS *Soul Edge*, I'll take 60 fps action over 30 fps any day of the week.





As with most AM2 games, ***Fighters MegaMix*** is not just a pretty face. Like *VF2* and *FV*, *Fighters MegaMix* is all about gameplay. Fast, fluid, intuitive gameplay. I've already mentioned that I think *VF2* and *FV* are among the best 3D fighting games ever created, and with *MegaMix* you're basically getting both games in one, with added extras! I'll admit that *VF2* (or rather *VF* mode) isn't the easiest of beat-'em-ups to get into (which probably explains why it's not that popular in the States), but persevere and you'll discover why it's been the most successful coin-op series in Japan for the past three years. Behind the deceptively simple three button Punch, Kick, Guard system lies a wealth of technique and strategy just waiting to be discovered. AM2 makes fighting games that last.

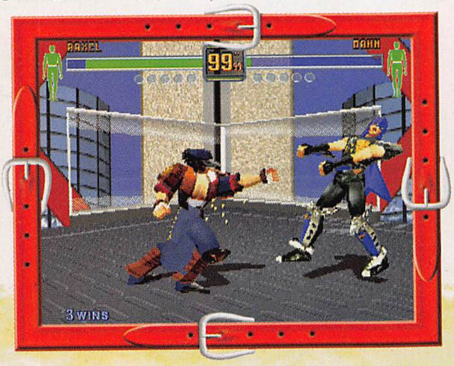
So there you have it. *Fighters MegaMix* is awesome. I mean, we knew it was going to be good, we just didn't know it was going to be this good. The end result is above and beyond our expectations, and confirms once again that Sega is still the best reason to own a Saturn. I know there are a lot of people out there who live for *Tekken 2* and *Soul Edge*, and won't even look at *Fighters MegaMix* (mostly biased PS owners), but personally I prefer the more realistic timing and strategy of *VF* to the arcade style preset combos of *Tekken 2* (though those are fun too!). In my opinion *Fighters MegaMix* is the best playing 3D beat-'em-up available on any console and a dream come true for *FV/VF* fans. Roll on Saturn *VF3* Sega, I'm ready! **K**





9: Siba was left out of the original Virtua Fighters, but he's back in MegaMix!
10: Things are getting a little silly now. The Hornet from Daytona? Riiggght.



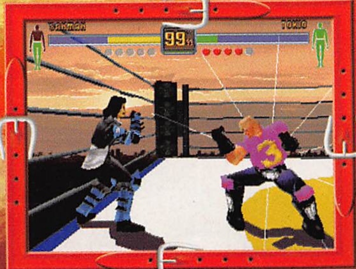






11: Meet Meat. Have fun ~~be~~... er, defeating this one.
12. The AM2 Tree. Hmmm... First Meat, then wood. Now that's polygon power!!!

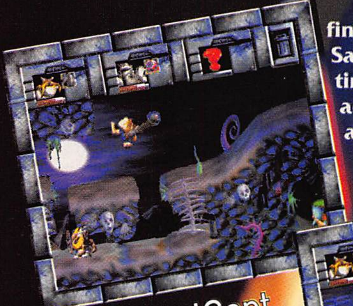








NORSE BY NORSE WEST







They're lost (man, are they lost) and they're Vikings so even though the name sounds more like the weather report this is, for the most part, *The Lost Vikings, Part 2.* And a fine Saturn game it is! In fact, this is one of the coolest Saturn games to come across my desk in quite some time. The gameplay is classic *Vikings* (pop some amino acids), the tunes are supremely happenin', and the characters, of which there are many, all feature well-acted and very comical speech. I'd swear the wolf is played by Gilbert Gottfreid. They're each finely rendered as well, adding a nice shade of depth to the crazy on-screen antics. Graphically, look forward to dizzying colors, loads of parallax, and high quality animation. For those unfamiliar with the *LV* concept, it's all about team work, and puzzle solving, in an action environment. Sound cool? Well, you have no idea. It's ultra cool! Each character has special abilities (jumping, blocking, flying, swinging, attacking, etc). You must find the way to position and utilize each in a specific order. If one dies, it's back you go. We'll have more on this exciting new SS title as soon as Beam wraps it up. We'll talk again! *E*

They're back! 'Cept now they talk the talk, and the graphics... are really good!











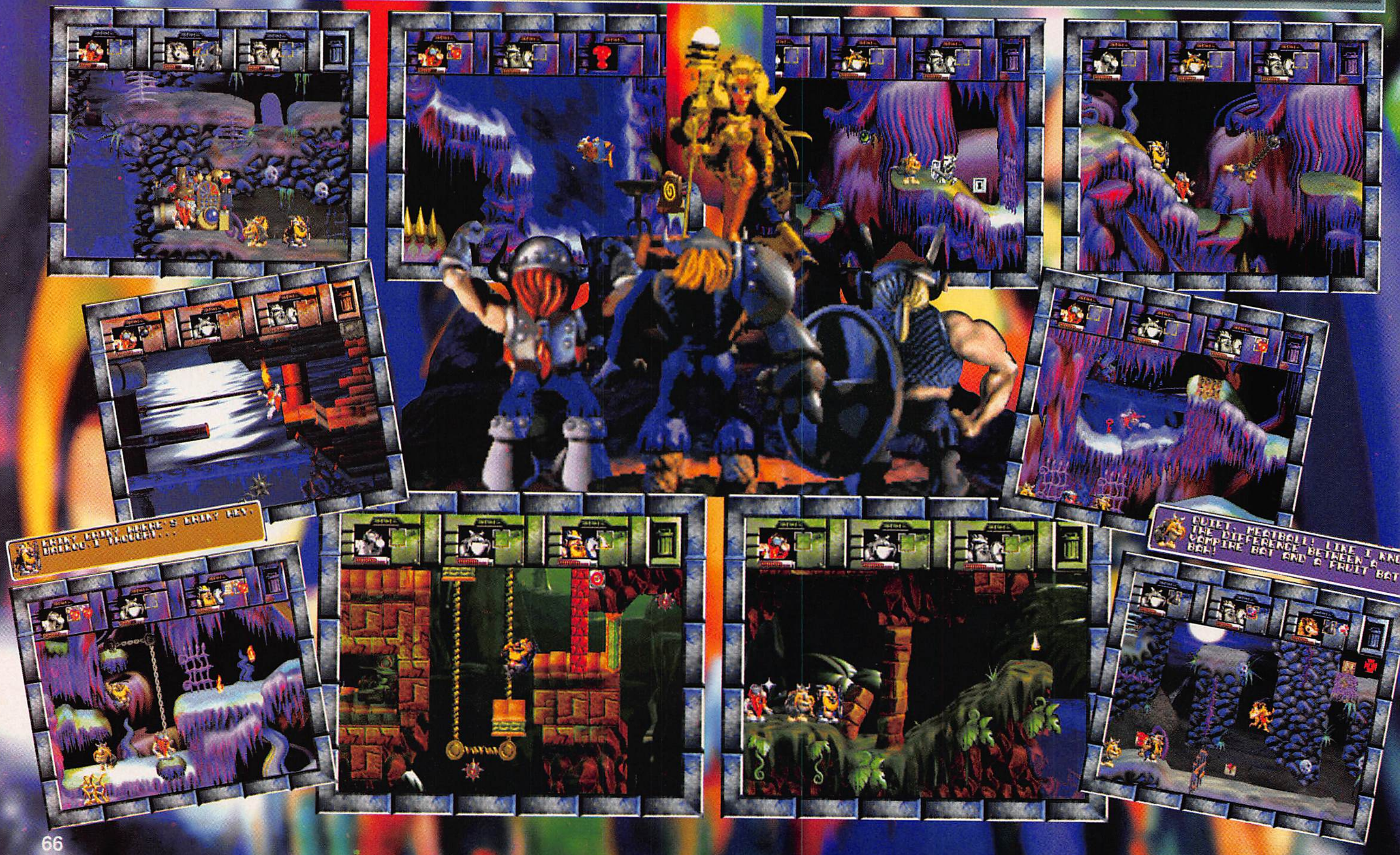
PREVIEW

SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - BEAM	# OF PLAYERS - 1-2
PUBLISHER - INTERPLAY	DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - MARCH

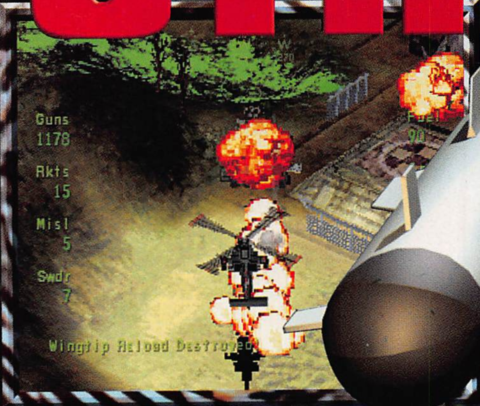


E. STORM
IT'S ALL ABOUT TEAM-VERK, YAH, I'M TELLING YOU!



SOVIET STRIKE















Up until *Soviet Strike*, the *Strike* franchise was synonymous with Sega. The *Strike* series started life on the Genesis, and the Sega versions were always first and best. But with the advent of Sony, all that changed. PlayStation owners got *Soviet Strike* first, and Saturn owners have had to wait four months for their version to come limping in. In EA's defense they have taken the time to add some extra Saturn exclusive features, but it's definitely a sign o' the times...

In most respects, Saturn *Soviet Strike* and PS *Soviet Strike* are identical. The controls, mission objectives, level terrain and enemy AI are all the same, making this essentially the same great game that it is on the PS. The trademark *Strike* mix of action and strategy remains intact, as does the awesome CD-streamed terrain, interactive music, and realistic 3D models. As with the PS version, Saturn *Soviet Strike* suffers some pretty nasty slowdown in the 'Chase' camera mode, and the enemy units can still attack you from way off screen (arrgh!), but I guess that's just the nature of the beast.

So what's different here? Well, first the negative. The Saturn version has grainier FMV than the PS, and no transparencies on the explosions. But I guess that was to be expected. Now the positive. Exclusive to Saturn *Soviet Strike* are improved pyrotechnics (certain structures have new destruction animations), analog control (real nice), selectable difficulty settings (thank God!) and best of all, two new weapons. On top of the three standard *Strike* weapons your chopper now comes equipped with a powerful anti-armor missile capable of instantly destroying any heavily armored unit, and a cool wing tip-mounted auto-cannon which is more effective than your standard chaingun.

In balance, these additions do make the Saturn version slightly more desirable than the PS version, but only just. Regardless of what system you own, if you've ever played and enjoyed a *Strike* game then this is definitely for you. It's everything you could wish for in a 32-bit update. If, however, you've never played a *Strike* game then this isn't the best introduction to the series (it's a case of in at the deep end, I'm afraid). Still, if you've got the patience, and you like a bit of strategy with your carnage, you could do a heck of a lot worse. *K*





REVIEW — SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - EA	# OF PLAYERS - 1
PUBLISHER - EA	DIFFICULTY - ADVANCED
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - FEBRUARY



KNIGHTMARE
The best Strike yet!

HEXEN










Well, here's a turn up for the books! For once, the Saturn version of a game is better than the PS version! As with PS *Hexen*, the game design and mechanics are identical to the PC version, and that's definitely a good thing. Even in the this day of *Quake* and *Duke Nukem 3D*, *Hexen* is still a stand-out first-person shooter, and going through it again on Saturn only re-confirmed to me how much I enjoyed playing it the first time around. Where the Saturn version improves on the PS version, however, is in the area where you'd least expect it: the graphics.

First off, the game runs at a much higher frame rate than the PS version, and although it's not quite as smooth as the seminal *PowerSlave*, it's not so bad that it ruins the gameplay (like the PS version). Secondly, the game gives you a lot more options than the PS version, like a brightness setting, or the ability to play the game full screen *without* compromising too much speed. Thirdly, the Saturn version contains full animation on all of the enemy monsters, including the gory 'overkill' death sequences (the PS version was missing the body explosions).

Graphics aside, what makes *Hexen* so good is its unique blend of exploration, action and puzzles. Obviously there's the usual smattering of violence and death, but that's not what characterizes the game. Unlike most POV shooters, *Hexen* operates on an innovative non-linear level structure called the 'hub' system. Each 'episode' is based around a single hub—a large level with multiple exits to various sub-levels—and in order to complete a hub you must venture to and fro between these sub-levels, finding keys or solving puzzles that will open up a new area back in the central hub. This gives the game an almost RPG feel and certainly adds a welcome element of adventure to the carnage.

One final point is that Saturn *Hexen* features a link-up mode, the first American release to do so! *Hexen* Deathmatch contains a lot of unique features, including the ability to choose between three different character classes, each with their own physical properties and weapons. Deathmatch takes *Hexen* into new realms, and even though it's impractical (you need two copies of the game and two TV's) it's what POV shooters are all about. *K*







REVIEW

SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - PROBE	# OF PLAYERS - 1 PLAYER
PUBLISHER - GT INTERACTIVE	DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - NOW

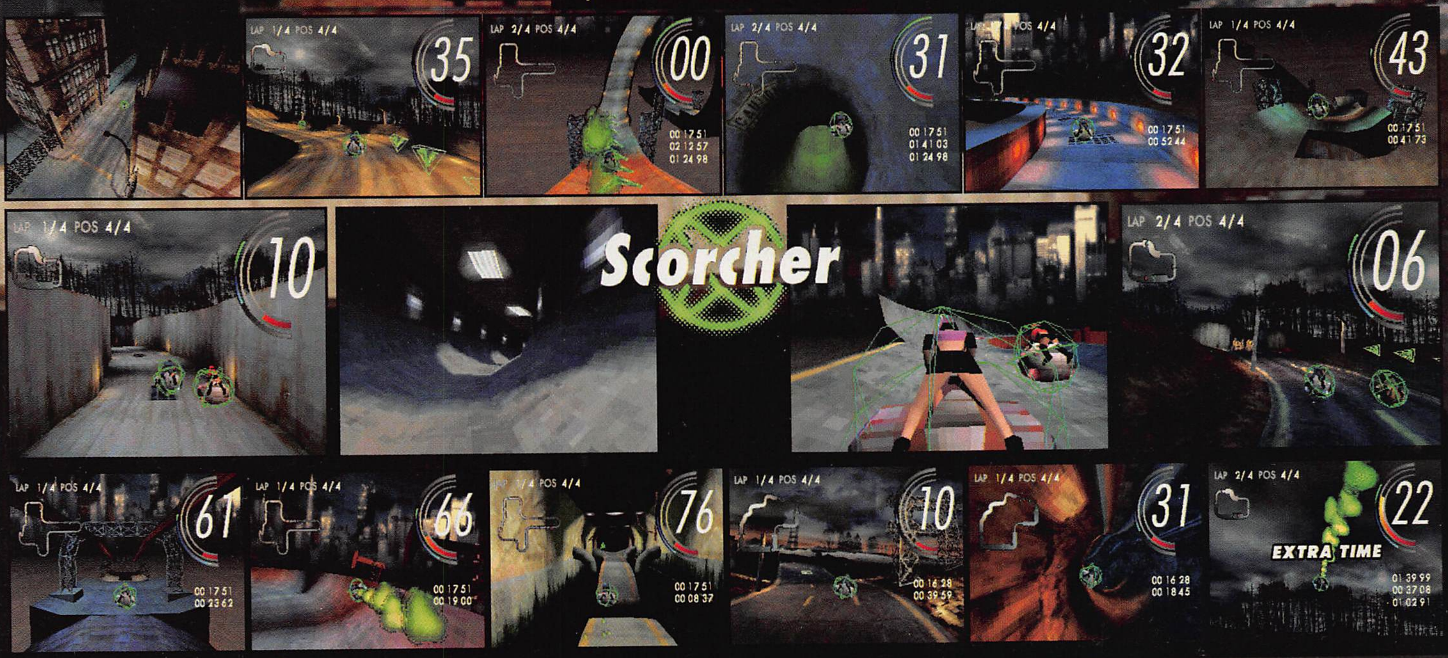


KNIGHTMARE
Better than the PS version, for a change!

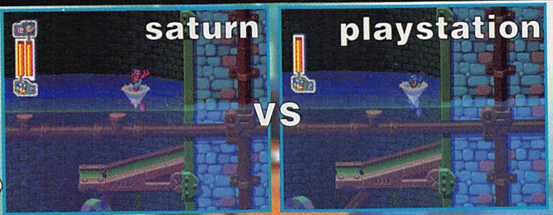


Now that AMOK has finally made its way into lucky Saturn owners hands, it's time to start looking forward to Scavenger's 2nd long lost Saturn title, Scorcher, from their Zyrinx team. Scorcher is entering the final tweaking stages and should be available no later than March. The game's visuals are absolutely unbelievable, and the gameplay, a mix of racing and avoiding obstacles by jumping pits and hazards while piloting a hover bike within a sphere, is totally unique. I should have a Scorcher review next month if everything goes as planned. When did we do that cover?...



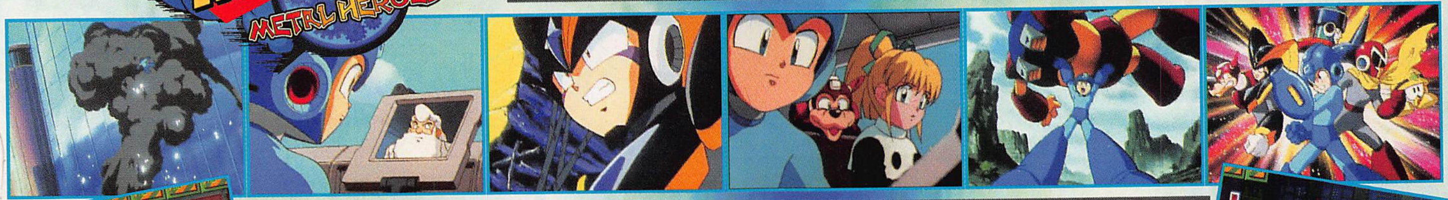








If I've said it once I've said it, a, 2000 times! The Saturn's strength lies in the realm of 2D, a genre full of gaps and bursting with possibility. *Astal 2* anyone? How 'bout *Castlevania*, *Ghouls 'n Ghosts*, *Strider*, and er, *SONIC* fer gods sake! The list goes on and on. Jeez, if I was Sega prez for 1 week I could turn the whole bloody company around! Anyhow, as you can see from the comparison above,





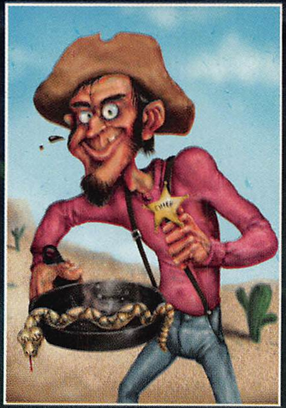
The Saturn H^2O is swirling nicely, while the PS's remains flat. Otherwise the game's identical... identical! You can't say that about any PS 3D conversions now can you? *MM8* is classic *MM* platforming joy with lovely animation, bushels of challenge, great music, and, of course, amazing hand-drawn art. What's that you ask? Well, that's when a human actually draws a character without CPU assistance. Gads! What a concept! No renders?... We'll surely perish! Buy this game ASAP if you don't think I'm 100% wacko, it's a great SS game.







CHIEF HAMBLETON TOUR OF DUTY - PART 1: AN AUDIENCE WITH CORE DESIGN





Earlier this year, Chief Hambleton packed his frying pan and traveled to the UK. Staying as the guest of the Guvnor, his mission soon became clear: to interview a couple of England's finest software developers. First stop; Core Design, the creators of *Tomb Raider*. Here's the first installment of what he discovered...

On a cold English winter morn, I left the relative safety of the Guvnor's shady East End pub in a fog-filled London and ventured Northwards in search of Core Design's headquarters. The task? To interview those responsible for the seminal *Tomb Raider*, to see what choice pieces of new software the entire Core development staff were laboring on, and to gain the first available information on the forthcoming *Tomb Raider 2*. The following events transpired...

As I gained entry to Core's main building (a beautiful mansion nestled in the town of Derby), I was guided through the maze of stairs and narrow corridors until finally I gained an audience with the actual creator of the *Tomb Raider* concept. Taking a break from their latest (and most secretive) project, Toby Gard (game creator) and Paul Douglas (lead programmer) agreed to talk about the phenomenal success of this awesome game. Here's what they had to say...

CH: What sort of involvement did you have on Tomb Raider?

TG: I came up with the original game design and I animated of all of the characters and objects in the game. I sort of overlooked all the rest of it.

CH: How many people were involved in the Tomb Raider *project and how long did it take?*

TG: It took 18 months from start to finish, but the initial concept began almost two years before we finished the actual final project.

CH: How many people were involved in Tomb Raider?

TG: Well, we had our main team of three programmers and three artists, and then we had a guy for the sounds and a guy who did the music, and we had lots of people working on it, a load of extra artists who helped out, mostly on the FMV sequences, and some people who dropped in at the last minute to help when we realized how big this was going to be.

CH: So it grew sizably?

TG: Yes, in the last few months it became quite a large group, but even then, trying to hit deadline was pretty tough.

CH: What do you think was the most difficult aspect of the game to program?

TG: I don't know, I'm not a programmer, but I would imagine it would be all of it—it's pretty ambitious; an impressive achievement considering that the three main programmers hadn't made a game before. Shows you what incredibly talented individuals they are (!).

CH: Speaking of incredibly talented individuals,can I direct some specific programming questions to Paul Douglas? What particular areas caused you programming difficulties?

PD: The animation stuff was pretty complex, compared to everything else.

CH: Did you use real motion capture?

PD: No, there was no motion capture at all.

CH: What effects were you most and least happy with?

PD: There weren't that many effects in there, we wished we had just a little more time to put more effects in there, like more transparency stuff on the PlayStation.

CH: Were you pushing the PlayStation to the limit?

PD: No, but the Saturn was pushed, pretty much, but you can bring a bit more extra out of the PlayStation. Because it was a cross-breed format, we didn't have any extra time to implement specific console improvements. It was limited by the others, but the PlayStation version is the best version anyway... for the price.



CH: The game is on three formats, the PC, Saturn, and PlayStation. Which format are you most satisfied with?

TG: That's tricky... they're all pretty much the same—I mean they are all the same game. I suppose I like the accelerated PC version. You should check it out with the 3Dfx card...

CH: Were you tempted to do something like Lobotomy did with PowerSlave*; they changed level designs. Was there a temptation to do that or did you just want a straight conversion for each?*

TG: Well, no because each game had to be released simultaneously.I mean for us you have everyone working on the core routines of the game, then one person spend a little time just working on the stuff to make that work on that platform, it wasn't like there was an individual programmer and each version was significantly different ... they're all the same.

CH: Speaking of Tomb Raider's *music, do you think in-game music is important to you, or do you prefer it to sort of enhance the atmosphere rather than sort of jingle away in the background?*

TG: Yeah, that was the plan, it didn't work out quite as well as he had hoped. The plan was to do interactive music, it shouldn't go on all of the time, because then you get sick of it and just shut it off. You should enter a certain area you have a dramatic moment enhanced with the music.

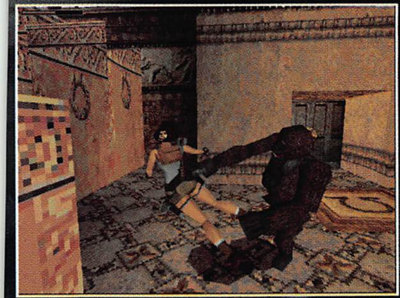
CH: What do you think of the success of Tomb Raider*; are you surprised that it's done as well as it has, and what would you attribute it to?*

TG: Well, I suppose we were hoping for it to do well, but it's still kind of a bit of a shock. It has done well because I think everyone on the team cared about it as much as they did.

CH: What are your opinions on the growing cult of Lara Croft; people on the Internet are sampling various parts of the game



"DO YA FEEL LUCKY BOYS! WELL DO YA!!"







and joining them up into sort of, er, interesting phrases. There's Lara Croft lookalikes... Since you invented the character, what do you think of it?
TG: Well, it's pretty strange; I didn't intend to go about promoting the character, like the print-loads of stuff in magazines, and you hear that networks are thinking about doing a cartoon... Yeah, it's quite strange. The most strangest thing is when I met one... or, three Lara lookalikes at a show, and I was just like... "Whoa, what a tribute!"
CH: *Is the rumor true that Lara is based on a real life archaeologist?*
TG: No. Completely untrue.
CH: *Who supplied the voice of Lara?*
TG: I think her name was Shelley! She was a voice-over actress; no one famous. Mind you, the French version of the game used the actress who did the voice-over for *Speed* over there.
CH: *How many polygons is Lara comprised of?*
TG: Around 300, with around half that for the rest of the background.
CH: *Will Lara turn up in* Tomb Raider 2 *or any other title?*
TG: Yeah, yeah, she's going to be in *Tomb Raider 2* for sure, but she's unlikely to appear in any other Core game as a secret character. Cool idea though.
CH: *What was your favorite part of the game?*
TG: I kind of liked the bit where she turned to gold in the PlayStation version. I like the bits where she gets grabbed by the T-Rex and eaten. And when she gets pounded by the last guy.
CH: *You mean when the giant demon without the legs just comes in and grabs her and then just pounds her on the floor?*
TG: It's sick, I know, but I like that.
CH: *Why do you think you went with the full 3D effect, I mean was there temptation to do a sort of Doom-style game or did you sort of want to go away from that?*
TG: We specifically decided not to do a *Doom*-style game; it was specifically to do a game that looked cinematic, that had all of the camera angles, constantly moving.
CH: *Did you get any inspiration from stuff like* Resident Evil*?*
TG: No, we didn't see that until we were way along the way in design terms. That stuff is preset camera locations anyway...
CH: *Were any of the zones based on real life temples or mazes, and did you use any of the texture maps, like gargoyle heads for example, from real-life sources. If you take a look at Doom, the gargoyle heads on the stone walls were taken from a book called "Nightmares in the Sky." Did you use any of that sort of thing to texture map?*
TG: Uh no, but the guys that worked on the maps spent a lot of time researching references for the levels. The Inca place is based on a myth of the last lost city hidden deep in South America. That's where the Incas are supposed to finally hidden all of their gold from the Spaniards... And there's a load of hidden places that the *TR2* team incorporating into *Tomb Raider 2*.

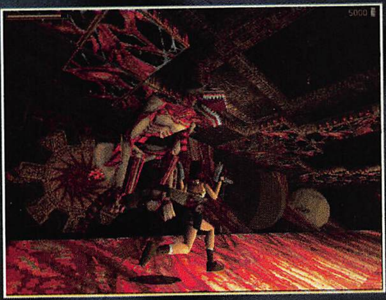


Paul Douglas and Toby Gard, suitably chuffed with their achievement. Note that all *Tomb Raider* shots taken from the PC version.

CH: *What's your take on the status of the big three video game companies; Nintendo, Sega, and Sony?*
PD: Sega's got some good games, but seems to be a bit dead, really. No one's buying it. Sony's doing pretty well, but hasn't got any good games. Not themselves, anyway. And that's what it takes. Nintendo has got *Mario*, haven't they? And *Mario Kart*, and a whole line up of games that you can see coming out.
TG: What do I think of them? Uhh... I think Nintendo's got a great machine but they'd probably be terrible to work for, but from a consumer's point of view they've got it so right and they do such quality games and they don't let rubbish come out [*Hambleton note - Toby hadn't seen* Cruis'n USA *at the time of the interview*], which is great.
CH: *So do you think the future is going to be a battle between Sony and Nintendo?*
PD: Yes. But until Saturn 2 and PlayStation 2 come out...
CH: *What sort of developers do you most admire within the industry?*
PD: Developers? Uh, LucasArts.
TG: I suppose Looking Glass. Yeah, they're pretty good.
CH: *Finally, what sort of games do you personally play, what are your favorites?*
PD: Uhh, I can't remember the last game I played... Hey, *Tomb Raider's* quite good (laughs). I play *Puzzle Bobble* on the PlayStation.
TG: I'm still playing *Mario 64*, and I play a bit of *Tekken 2*.
CH: *Okay, thank you very much for your time.*

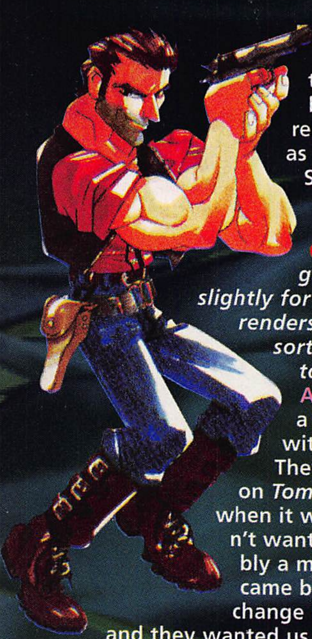
The excitement didn't end there, either! After tea and biscuits, I was escorted to the office of Adrian Smith (Vice President). My mission? To obtain the very latest information on Core's plans for 1997, their take on the state of play in the market, and some really rather secretive information on a little side project of theirs called *Tomb Raider 2*. Let us begin...

CH: Thanks for granting us an interview. Firstly, I was just wondering what your take is on Sega, Sony and Nintendo... without obviously treading on anyone's toes...
AS: No, I don't think we'll tread on anyone's toes. As of today, Core hasn't synched up a relationship with Nintendo, but we're actually pursuing it at the moment. We'll be talking to Nintendo, and trying for a license, we're quite interested in the hardware. I think it's a good time to talk to Nintendo, when Core's probably got its best, as opposed to twelve months ago before we shocked the world with *Tomb Raider*. So it's something that we would like to get started.
CH: *Would you envision an N64 version of* Tomb Raider?
AS: Well, we might envision it, but I don't know whether Nintendo would. We've all thought about what it would look like on the N64, we've seen the PC version running on the 3Dfx cards, which looks close to what the N64 version would look like, and that is just amazing.
CH: Tomb Raider *would be an easy port over because it doesn't have much in the way of soundtracks. Am I correct?*
AS: That's right. Our main problem (more that we thought) would be the amount of textures that we're holding, all of the texture data. But I have to say that the sound for some of the N64 is very impressive.
CH: *I think the best sounds that we've heard is in* Killer Instinct Gold.
AS: I haven't seen it yet, but I've read about it. Is it nice?
CH: *It is. A couple of people at GameFan really like* Killer Instinct; *I can't say I'm one of them. The sound is first-rate though.*
AS: The Nintendo-direct stuff I think has been brilliant, but I've been very disappointed with the third party stuff I've seen to date. At the moment,









we continue to build on a very solid relationship with both Sega and Sony. Core has been with Sega in the past, and that's the relationship that we will build on. We're also as close to Sony as we are and have been with Sega. Obviously it helps to have a good title, and we're very fortunate with *Tomb Raider*, and that helps to build small bridges.

CH: *Because* Tomb Raider *is an English game, it's obviously had to be tweaked slightly for the Japanese market, such as the new renders. How much sway did you have in that sort of thing, or did you have people in Japan to sort that out?*

AS: No, we didn't. *Tomb Raider* was licensed a long time ago by Victor. We've worked with Victor in the past... five years, really. They have first options and they took options on *Tomb Raider* (known as *Tomb Raiders* in Japan) when it was a sketch on a piece of paper. They didn't want us to change anything, except for probably a month before it was finished when they came back to us and said that they wanted us to change her face to be more Manga-ish, if you like, and they wanted us to re-render the cut-sequences. This caused us horrendous problems, and in fact we didn't do it in the end because it probably would have taken us about two months to re-render, so they went with the western face.

CH: *So, essentially, the* Tomb Raider *game in Japan is the same.*

AS: Exactly the same; except for publicity shots where they've mocked over different faces, it's exactly the same.

CH: *What about voice-overs?*

AS: We've implemented Japanese voices and speech. They do all of that and ship it over to us, and send someone over to check that it's in the right place. Yeah, doing the Japanese version is just the same as doing a French, or an English, or a German version. They're very good, we give them time constraints and they keep to that. Actually, I just got a fax here that said it's actually been approved and gone through. The Japanese did a clever thing; they gave Lara a birthday of February the 14th, Valentines Day, and they're going to launch the PlayStation version on Feb. 14th.

CH: *What does Core have in store for the next twelve months; there are obviously the games that I've already seen, I've seen the* Ninja *game, and* Judgement Force, *and* Swagman, *which is obviously your next big one.*

AS: We've got four titles for 1997. *Swagman*, then *Ninja*, then *Judgement Force*, then *Tomb 2*. You've probably seen a little of *Tomb 2*.

CH: *I was told TR2 was only just started?*

AS: Yes, it started just before Christmas. We've been working on *TR2* for quite some time. The engine development has been going on for some time as well. It's a good deal of the way through now, basically we know now how long it will take us to do the levels, that's the big thing. So, it's very different, but with the essence of *Tomb Raider*. If you take what the gameplay was but with more effects and a whole lot more. We're aiming it to be as different and as shocking as *Tomb Raider* was. We're doing a lot more effects and we're going outside now. We've got some lovely locations, such as Venice which looks absolutely superb, I've seen the mock-ups of it. We've created a proper Venice which is ransacked and crumbling, you've got buildings half fallen, and Lara will be outside before she visits the final level...

CH: *And that's coming out on the PlayStation and PC would you say?*

AS: And Saturn. We've been talking to Sega about this cartridge which will be launched for *Virtua Fighter 3* at Christmas—there's a possibility of using that, and increasing it further than say the PlayStation version. But we've now got someone who is taking the bits here and will go on and produce the Saturn version for us. So yeah, we had certain constraints with the original *Tomb Raider* that we're going to remove on *Tomb Raider 2*, we hope that it should be as good as the PlayStation version of *TR2*.

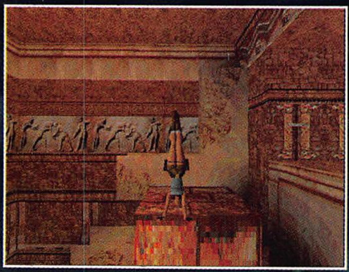
CH: *When do you plan on releasing it?*

AS: The 24th of November. It's the twelve-month day to day from the original one.

CH: *So sort of like what Namco did with* Ridge Racer *and* Revolution.



PIERRE AND LARA JAPAN STYLE!





AS: Yes, and it's going to be an easier process this time; we know how long the levels will take, and how long for the character animation.

CH: *So it's a lot more straightforward because you have core routines already implemented from the first game?*

AS: Yeah. And we're very fortunate to have a French artist who has done some stunning character designs, so we may introduce a lot more characters into the game. The original artist and creator (Toby) has gone on to look at the next generation of games along with Paul. Two of the original programmers of *Tomb Raider* have stayed on the team, and we're bringing in someone else new into it, so we'll have new blood in there which I think will make a difference.

CH: *What sort of enemies will Lara have to face? Are they similar?*

AS: Nope. Quite different. It won't be human based but interaction with realistic beings. There's another storyline which will spin through the game. We're going to have the generic wolves and bats, but we're changing all of that, in fact that is no enemy being used in the second one that you've seen before. The list is even bigger because some of the locations. We're going to have crows, and dogs, and eagles...

CH: *Would you say that the game is about as long as* Tomb Raider?

AS: Yeah, it's exactly the same amount of levels, which is purely why we chose all the locations. We've done two, that won't be similar to *Tomb Raider*, one is Venice, another of the levels will be an underwater sunken vessel which is split into three separate zones...

CH: *I think that's what quite a lot of people were expecting with Atlantis, and we got instead this sort of pulsing alien type skin board with hideous baying freaks...*

AS: Er, yeah. So the theme at the moment centers around the thousand terra cotta soldiers and the great wall of China. It's a really nice skew I think, but I can't reveal any more...

CH: *Are you going to be applying similar CG cut scenes as before?*

AS: That's the one thing we haven't agree on yet is, the other ones took so long, and we all liked them, but everyone probably watched them once, then skipped it. But the cut scenes worked really well for it, so we're looking at maybe slightly better, high-res cut scenes.

CH: *Are you still going to be employing British Archeologist Lara Croft?*

AS: Yup.

CH: *Because that went down extremely well in the US.*

AS: We're going to track the original voice-over woman down, but yeah, she's the same ol' Lara. She's a bit more coy, she's a bit older, a bit wiser. And there will be different characters that she'll meet along the way, a lot of people like sort of the Pierre that kept coming back for more and being a pain in the arse, shot you a few times, you shot him like four hundred times and he disappeared. So a bit more of that, a bit more of...

CH: *Re-emerging enemies coming in from scene to scene?*

AS: Yeah. Visually, I think it will be better. Venice looks brilliant; lots of old buildings crumbling into the water. That's going to be the biggie, we know people will have jumped on the *Tomb Raider* wagon and will be developing games like *Tomb Raider*, and we know we've got a window of opportunity of twelve months, I don't expect that there will be anything out within that time period. We've taken the engine and we've pushed it further, we've taken the tools we create environments in and pushed those further, so I think we'll come up with a much stronger game four months down the line.

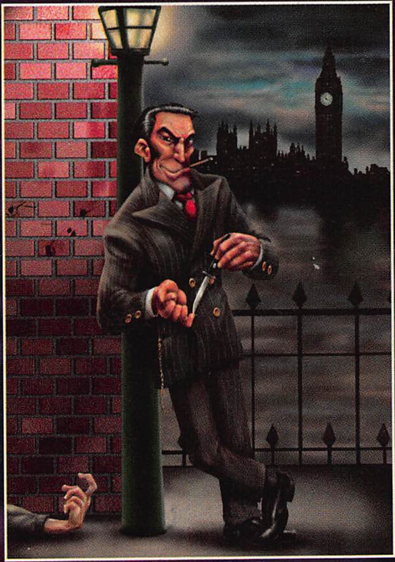
CH: *Thank you very much for your time.*

The Core story is only just beginning... Next month, we reveal all the other projects Core are working on for 1997, including interviews with the teams responsible for *Ninja*, *Judgement Force* and *Swagman*. We also journey to Fortress Rare and chat to the Developers of *GoldenEye* on the N64. Join us next month as Chief Hambleton's Tour of Duty continues...

Chief Hambleton and the entire GameFan staff would like to thank Susie, Toby, Adrian, Jeremy and the entire Core Design staff.

The Guvnor presents... EUROPA

OI YOU! GET ORF MY MANOR! SO YOU WANT THE LATEST WORD FROM THE WORLD OF UK GAMING DO YOU, ME OLD COCKER SPANIELS? WELL READ ON!



Read all abaht it! More trivial chat from Old Brittania, the country which gave to you *The Prodigy*, *James Pond* and *Worms*—what do you think of the show so far? (It's traditional to shout, "RUBBISH!" at this point... oh you wouldn't understand anyway). Right, how's about this...?

THE PLAYSTATION RULES

It's not even worth pretending that it was a long, hard-fought battle this past Christmas. Sony walked all over Sega, with sales now holding out at a little over three PlayStations to one Saturn in UK homes. In fact there was even a pre-Christmas panic concerning availability of the PS which started from other areas of Europe where they suffered shortages. In the end we pulled through and Sega pulled over. Sorry, this is already starting to look grim for Sonic's prestigious stable.

BRITISH SATURN OWNERS ARE FOOLS?

Well, you know there's little hope for a nation who can't recognize that one of the greatest games on the Saturn is there. *Virtual On*—that skillful conversion of the fantastic AM3 arcade experience—only just managed to make the bottom of the Saturn-specific charts in the month of its release. It didn't even feature in the All Format chart! We all went and bought sodding Saturn *Doom* though; probably the worst translation of id's bygone classic ever seen. The mind most certainly boggles. Of course Sega didn't let anybody know *Virtual On* was going on sale. Perhaps this MIGHT have had something to do with this MINOR catastrophe in our lifetime... what will Sega NOT think of next? Doh!!!

EA TAKES ROOT AND BRANCHES OUT

A company recently more committed to providing the UK gamer with exactly what 'he/she/it' wants, is Electronic Arts. They now have a UK specific HQ—in operation since early January—which will act as a separate department to the already established European office. This has more to do with streamlining retail than anything else, but the new move could also affect the development of software at a later date. The Public Relations department, being UK specific, will be able to monitor customer needs much more closely. No more horse manure like *FIFA '97* then...



EA sets out to take the UK more seriously.

BLOODY BRIBES

As if *Resident Evil* required any kind of publicity at all (the word of mouth euphoria which preceded that game over here was phenomenal), Virgin chose a shocking display to raise awareness. They did too, as well as complaints from concerned parents. Understand this thing wasn't used with too much reserve. This is giant sized billboard material! Actually this is nothing compared to the Greenpeace cinema ad which showed gallons of blood spewing from a lavatory. Larverly.



That subtle *Resident Evil* ad... Pass the soap.

WHAT A DISASTER!

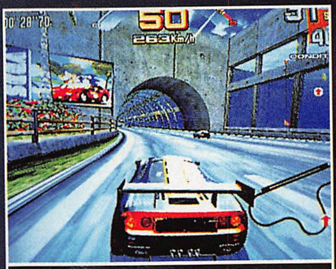
As the UK launch date of the Nintendo 64 (March 1st, 1997) crawls ever nearer, there have already been a few disappointments for the patient, verging-on-desperate British gamers. For a start, THE Games, Nintendo's exclusive UK distributor, recently revealed that *WaveRace 64* will not be joining *Super Mario 64*, *Pilotwings 64* and *Shadows Of The Empire* as one of the games available at launch as previously announced, and will now debut 3-4 weeks later. Although not exactly a disaster, this delay will deprive the machine of a multi-player game at launch.

Worse still, THE Games also revealed to British trade newspaper CTW that initial N64 shipments are likely to be very limited, with as few as 20,000 machines ready for launch and only a total of 90,000 machines available within the first three months. This is unlikely to satisfy demand—indeed, THE's own research indicates that over 160,000 eager punters will want to buy the machine at launch.

However, perhaps most annoying of all is that British punters will have to pay an outrageous £249 (around $400) for their N64s, while German gamers will only have to fork out a slightly more reasonable Dm399 (roughly $250)! Quite why this is the case is unclear, but Johnny Englander isn't too chuffed about the situation, to say the least.

AYE! AYE! IT'S THE ATEI!

It's the event we all attend to see... what has already been seen before. But occasionally there are some surprises in store. This time around London's premier arcade bash had *Tekken 3* from Namco and Sega brought *Scud Racer*. Savvy players already had these sussed in obscure parts of the fog-filled capital before the event, and we'll be going back to play them again just as soon as the event has passed us by. Early comments on *T3*? I Like Law's sharp new punches, but the graphical quality has a way to go before matching the awesome *VF3*! How come you US gamers don't get into that game? It's bloomin' flippin' magnificent!!!



Scud Racer - very impressive...

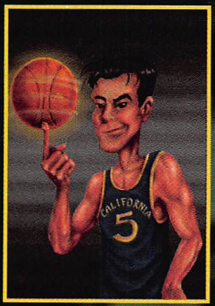


Tekken 3 - even more Rave War!

KONG KLINCHES IT!

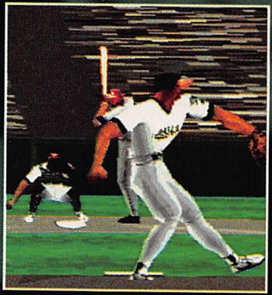
As in the US, the popularity of the 16-bit consoles in the UK is rapidly declining as the more powerful 32-bit and 64-bit machines come to the fore. That said, however, the big games still do remarkably well—over Christmas, *Donkey Kong Country 3* for the Super NES did exceptionally, outperforming many of the high-profile releases for the more advanced systems. For example, in the week ending January 11th, the Entertainment & Leisure Software Publishers Association's charts reported that *DKC3* sold more than the Saturn's *Virtua Cop 2* and *Daytona USA Championship Edition* and *WipeOut 2097* (XL) and *MK Trilogy* on the Playstation. Not bad for an old monkey, huh?

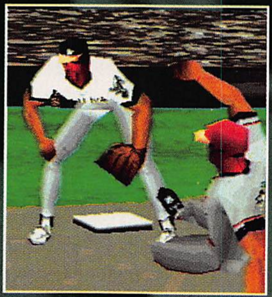
GAMEFAN SPORTS


"JOE"


"STRAP"

GameFan Sports Preview
VR Baseball '97





A sneak peek of the next installment in the VR Sports series. As you can see, the initial shots look promising. *VRB* is an all-polygon game, with real Drift mechanics. There are over 700 actual major leaguers; you'll be able to pick them out by their clear names, and numbered jerseys. Speaking of jerseys, each team has 4 of them: home, away, alternate and practice! *VRB* features real-time, 3D stadiums that have become characteristic of VR; all the stadiums are in here, including the 3 new ones in Atlanta, Anaheim and Oakland. You won't have to worry about the accuracy of each player's stats, as the rosters are complete with all 1996 stats. Get this: Your pitcher needs to warm up in the bull-pen before he's ready, and he even starts to lose accuracy and strength, as the games progresses. From the looks of it, *VR Baseball* seems to be a game with the right combination of game play, as well as smooth graphics and control that every sports gamer is looking for these days. We'll be back with an update soon!

FIFA 97



FIFA '97 is almost ready for the Saturn, so all you jealous Sega players will finally have the opportunity to play EA's 32-bit soccer update. Basically nothing is lost between the PS and Saturn versions, 'cept for a few fps of animation. Every polygonal player is fully rendered (using EA's proprietary "Motion Blending Technology"), motion-captured, and accurately textured according to their real-life personas. Over 4000 real players, from 12 international leagues, pack the rosters and fill the 3D stadiums.





FIFA '97 also includes Outdoor *and* Indoor matches—demanding that you mix-up your formations and re-think your gameplan to deal with the environments.

Anyway, the PS version is good, and although it may be inferior graphically (keep in mind, this could change), the Saturn version plays exactly the same. This info should tide you over till the review, coming up next issue. *JS*

GAMEFAN SPORTS — P PREVIEW — SEGA SATURN

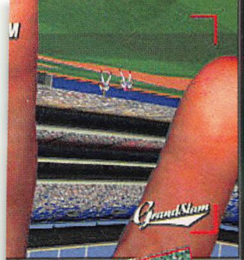
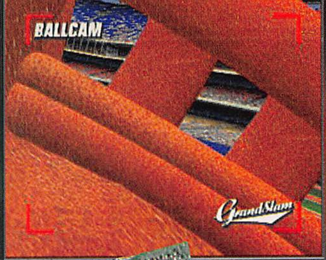
DEVELOPER - EA	# OF PLAYERS - 1-8
PUBLISHER - EA	DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - SPRING '97


JACQUES STRAP CAN'T WAIT TILL THIS ONE GETS OUT OF THE SHOP

KIDD'S CORNER



As we enter into a new season, the world of sports also makes its spring transitions. Spring training is right around the corner, as the Boys of Summer come out of hibernation. March Madness is about to burst upon the scene, but indications of a decline in popularity is already apparent, as more attention is shifted to the would-be collegiate stars, now in the NBA. Nevertheless, office pools will culminate and run amok, and not one of you will escape unscathed. Talked to NBA rookie, Shareef Abdur Rahim, asked him what his favorite game was, he said, "*NBA Live '97* on the PlayStation, and Vancouver's my favorite team." We'll see if Reef's sayin' it's his favorite in 2 years when he's a free agent... Remember Dennis Rodman? Well, now he's making movies, TV shows, was voted in the Top 10 Worst dressed women, and has recently kicked a cameraman in the family jewels—can hardly wait to see what's next in the Adventures of Rodman... How about my boy Jason Kidd? Shipped off without a return address; Big D will live to regret trading the 'chise... I'm telling you right now, that Tiger Woods can single-handedly revolutionize the game of golf. Never has one individual achieved as much success, so quickly, at such a young age... this guy is the real deal. One event coming up that really intrigues me, is the Fastest Man competition: a showdown between America's Michael Johnson and Canada's Donovan Bailey. Mark this one on your calendar (May 31), not only noteworthy because of its participants, but the prize money is $2 million, while each sprinter receives a $500,000 appearance award; a definite track and field first... My mighty Golden Bears aren't looking so Golden after losing Coach Mariucci to the Niners—a quick solution could be to hire the Niners' X-Coach Seifert; if the Cardinal can have Bill Walsh, why not? The 1997 NHL All-Star game will be played this weekend in Silicon Valley, good luck to all, and no high-sticking. Remember, "life's a sport, drink it up." Finally played 4-man *NFL GameDay*, and what a game that is, when played with four—highly recommended.








Grand Slam

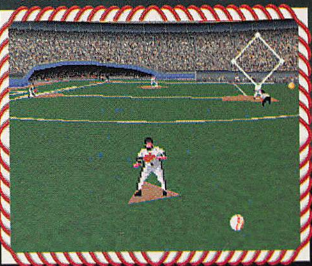
The early season baseball games are already starting to appear! First up at the plate: *Grand Slam '97*, from Virgin, by *Spot Goes to Hollywood* developers Burst. The standard these days is to include full license support from the MLBPA, with all your favorite pro players. *Grand Slam* gives 'em to you, among a healthy collection of other options that baseball fans are sure to appreciate.

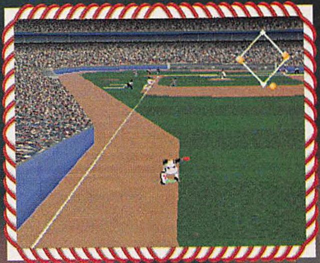
Our preview copy obviously needs some tweaking, but progress seems to be going well. The teams are fake, but at least there's been no attempt to label them with dumb phony names. And brief, accurate historical facts are tagged to the team selection screen (such as Detroit's dedication to keeping the team in the city), so you're still given a sense of reality. Stadiums, too, are accurately represented, such as Toronto's Skydome, Boston's "Green Monster," etc.

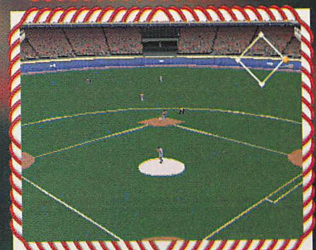
The gameplay is solid, not terribly exciting, but seems to be easily accessible. Pitches are selectable before winding up, and then a power meter (golf game-style) determines the power behind the throw. Cool idea. And finally, fielding and base running use simple one button controls; I've had no problems.

The 'tweaking', in my opinion, falls into two very important categories: loading times, and graphics. At this point, the game loads almost constantly. It'll load options, into more options, settings, into camera views, and then even the camera views need loading. *Very* annoying. And the graphics, despite a decent frame rate and cool 3D stadiums, aren't as detailed as they could be—including sprite-based players with stiff animation.

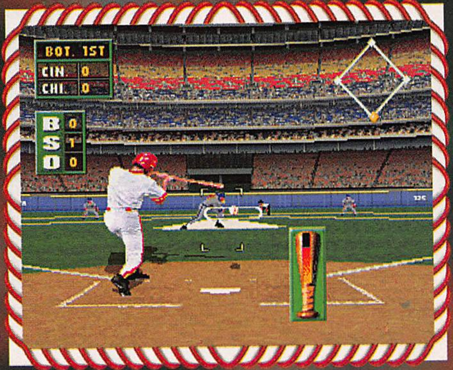
Anyway, that's the early report on *Grand Slam '97*. I'll dig up the latest rev and send an update your way soon. *JS*







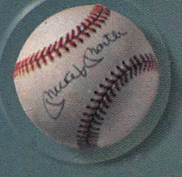









GAMEFAN SPORTS



PREVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - BURST

PUBLISHER - VIRGIN

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - NOW



JACQUES STRAP
Spring training begins.



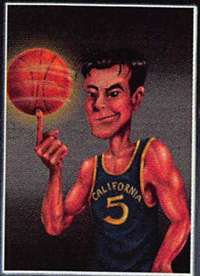
GAMEFAN SPORTS

超空間ナイター プロ野球キング
KING OF PRO BASEBALL™

REVIEW

NINTENDO 64

- DEVELOPER - SPD2
- PUBLISHER - IMAGINEER
- FORMAT - CARTRIDGE
- # OF PLAYERS - 1-4
- DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE
- AVAILABLE - NOW JAPAN



JOE KIDD
How cute.

Well sports fans, I'm about to pull an unprecedented first. Yes, as painful as it is for all of us macho, athletic wannabes to admit it, I'll be the first to come out and say King of Baseball is one cute game. Yes, "cute." I mean, I tried and I tried, and I just couldn't get away from this inevitable fact. Not only that, but *KOB* just happens to be a wonderfully addicting game. In terms of game mechanics, this game plays identically to Konami's smash hit *Talking Powerful Pro Baseball* for the Super Famicom in Japan. Also known as *Bottom of the Ninth* for the PS in America. Despite the similarities, *KOB* does look entirely different. In addition, there are many pleasantly surprising features and options that no other baseball game has ever dreamt of offering.

Batting

Batting can be considered the hardest part about *KOB*. You assume the classic batter's box point of view, which can be altered for a higher of lower view of the pitcher's mound. You must aim a target box directly where the hurtling ball will pass through your strike zone. This doesn't sound hard, but when you take super deformed characters with slow batting swings you'll soon understand what I say. To remedy this, Imagineer has added an extra option not found in any of Konami's baseball games, the Lock-On batting cursor. The Lock-On feature must be switched on, and is not a



BEACH BALL!



STRIKEOUT!

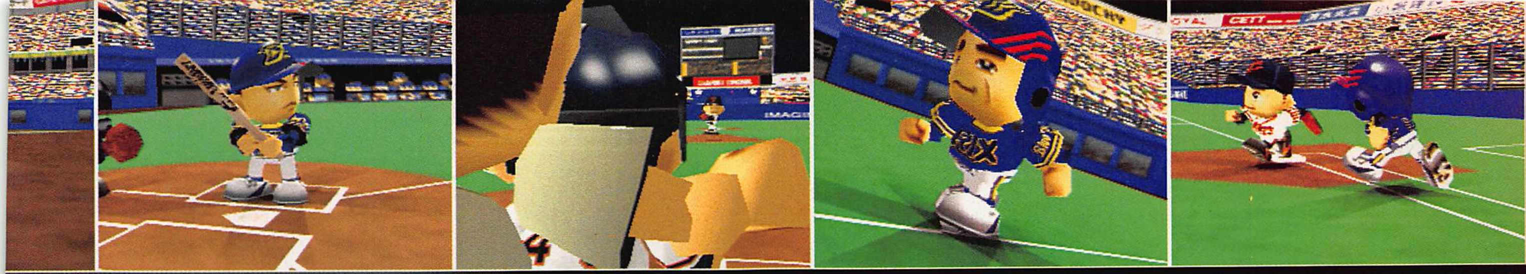


BEANED!

standard setting. The reason for this is because the the Lock-On feature makes batting extremely easy. The batting cursor will hold its position when placed on the pitcher's throwing cursor. So you've basically got two batting helpers, the batter's cursor which indicates when you're locked on, and a pitcher's cursor, which shows you exactly where the pitch will end up in relation to the strike zone. With the Lock-On feature enabled, expect high scoring games, and when playing two players, it soon becomes a true test of fielding skills.



Training Modes: This is what sets this game apart from the rest as you train in pitching, batting, catching (shown from left to right) and fielding. Your desire to improve and impeccable work ethic translate into higher levels of performance come game time.



Fielding

Fielding here is the same as any other baseball game. One thing you must accept is these tiny players run very slow. I presume they are running slowly to match the scale size of the stadium, but I may be grasping. By having a keen eye, you can actually tell where the ball will end up, as the ball is hit. This is possible because there is no visible black screen as the game makes the transition from behind the batter to an above the diamond camera angle. Rather the game zooms out following the ball making it easier to predict its path rather than being surprised.



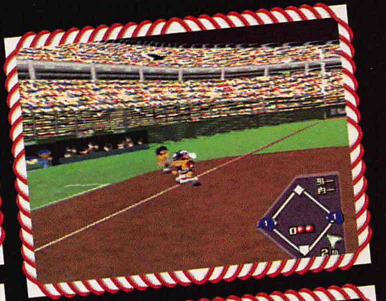
Training

In *KOB* it's possible to hone the skills of your players on your favorite teams, or a team which you have created. Every position can be put to the test, from batting, pitching, fielding, and even down to catching bunts with the catcher. When these tests have been passed (3 to 5 tests per position), your character will level up for whatever aspect was practiced. For example: Practicing pitching with my star pitcher whose best pitch is a sinker with a level of 2, it took me about 4 hours to gain one level. However, things like batting averages can only go up in a game. I can effectively work it up to level 5, that being the best. Achieving level 5 will add either more speed to the sinker, more spin to the sinker, or even both!

Stealing

Thanks to the plethora of buttons to be found on the N64's controller, the many options at your fingertips can become overwhelming at times. The directional C buttons each correlate to a base within the diamond. For example, down is home, right is first, up is second, etc. When stealing, you can buffer your command by pressing the advance button before the pitcher winds up allotting you more time to concentrate on the pitch. The only disadvantage is your runner can be easily be picked off by the pitcher. Or you can steal by pressing the advance button during the pitcher's wind up, this way you can avoid the pick and get that extra mileage or avoid a double play. When caught in a pickle, it's not like other games where you can time your opponent's throw animation to work in your favor. Here, they still throw annoyingly slow, yet the person with the ball can run about 4 times faster than the runner caught in the pickle. This becomes annoying when your runner is tagged out by the catcher who sprints faster than Jessie Owens with 20 pounds of gear.











While the visuals found in *KOB* can be considered a bit childish, the game itself is pure perfection. With the option to create your own team, hone their skills, play a season, save stats, make trades–*and* addicting gameplay, this one's a must have for baseball enthusiasts. The hardcore player may want to settle for something less childish in the graphics dept. but they will soon be content with the number of features available.

Check Out These Stadiums! ***King of Baseball*** provides you with 14 different stadiums; 12 actual Japanese fields, as well as two fantasy parks to mix it up.













I gotta tell ya, this soccer thing is really growing on me. Never before have I had such a stirring inside of me to run up and down a field, kicking a checkered ball into giant nets. But it's games like *Perfect Striker* that only add to this recent symptom. I guess I shouldn't say games like *Perfect Striker*, because there *is* no game like it. This is one of those rare occurrences that's like eating hamburgers your whole life, and then discovering how good it was to have steak.



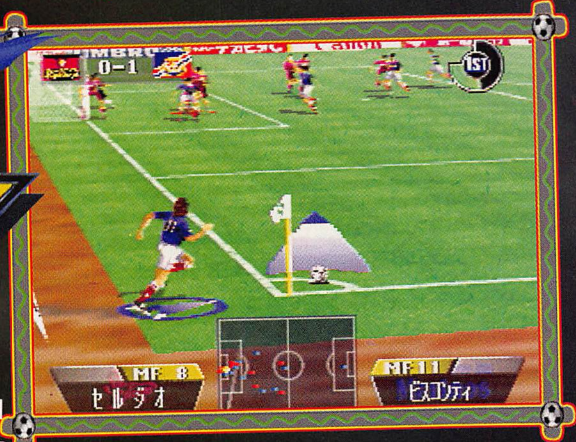


The Beauty of N64:

I didn't think graphics and player control could get any smoother in a soccer game, but now, not only do we have no load time on this cartridge-format title, but also seamless play control and animation due to N64's powerhouse processors. In fact, using the Motion Capture process, Konami grabbed over 17,000 animations for character movements (for 16 real teams, and 256 actual Japanese players). Another big advantage to this N64 game is that all the character movements are on the fly, thus, there are no pauses, and everything happens when it's are supposed to. For instance, the commentary (incidentally a world-renowned Japanese soccer voice), has over 500 different words and phrases included, and the fact that every word is played back on the fly means you don't have to wait 20 seconds to hear the correct player's name being called. Instead, you get non-stop commentary that is not only intelligent as it should be, but timely—a wonderful and effective combination.

実況J.LEAGUE パーフェクトストライカー







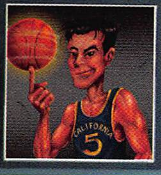
GAMEFAN SPORTS

R REVIEW

NINTENDO 64

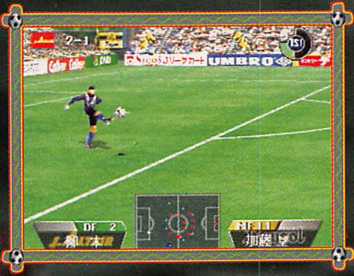
DEVELOPER - KONAMI
PUBLISHER - KONAMI
FORMAT - CARTRIDGE

OF PLAYERS - 1-4
DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE
AVAILABLE - NOW JAPAN



JOE KIDD
You can't touch this.






Shooting/Passing:

Shooting and passing are somewhat complex, as you can do many things never before offered in a soccer game. You can keep the ball on the ground or you can put it in the air. You are able to monitor the distance of your kicks, and have a map to indicate the general vicinity in which it will land. You have things like Search Passes, which automatically passes it to the closest teammate, regardless of which direction you are facing. Of course you have headers, as well as bicycle kicks too, but the most exciting feature of kicking may be the curving feature. Once the ball is in flight, you can actually curve the ball with your analog stick or D-pad. Incredible, as this is all on the fly. You'll need plenty of practice though.

Training:

Apparently the Training Mode in Japanese sports games is a pretty hot item. And as far as I'm concerned, American companies should take note, because I for one love the practice mode. I can practice every aspect of the game, from slide tackles to corner kicks, kicks in the air to keeping it on the ground, blocking defense to 1-2 kicks, headers to throw-ins; it is truly a great feature to have. In select games, such as *King of Baseball*, they even allow you to benefit from the practice which translates into heightened skills in your game career. Sure, some advocate just jumping in with both feet and learning "the hard way," and there really is no substitute for good old-fashioned experience, but for guys that need to work at it like me, it's great to have isolated areas to work on the different facets of your game.

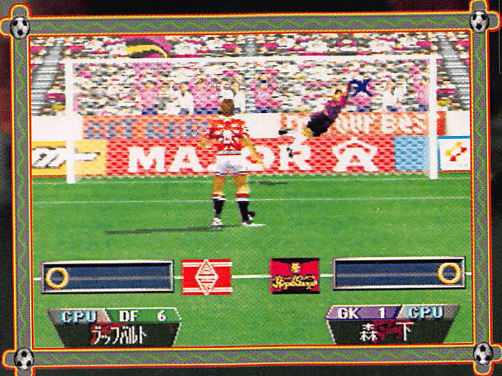
Scenario Mode:

In this mode the game really gets fun, and it would be safe to say is the best one player feature in the game. Basically the game gives you this mode, where you get 12 historical games to choose from. For example you get to be one of the teams from last year's Japan Cup in the final game, and of course the score is tied 2-2 with just 23 seconds on the clock! It's up to you to determine the outcome of that game, and turn back the clocks on history. You can even save the Scenario mode to your memory card, so if your friend wants to play as well, just bring over your memory card and you can up-load your game data onto his system and he can play your game when you leave. If this is not the best soccer game out there, I'm not sure what is. *Viva Perfect Striker!*

JK








Four-Way Face Off!

EA Sports, Virgin/ESPN, Sony and Midway Scramble for On-Ice Supremacy
By Bill Kunkel

Hockey has always been the red-headed stepchild of the major team sports, but in recent years it has finally begun to come into its own. After years of ghettoization in Canada and the Northeastern United States, hockey is breaking out, inking major contracts with Fox and ESPN and drawing serious ratings in the process. But if you really want to see how far the fastest team sport on Earth has come, scope out the evolution of hockey simulations. Ever since EA Sports established its landmark NHL series during the power days of 16-bit technology (just when inline skates and roller hockey was becoming a big deal in schoolyards), terms like "drop pass" and "one-timer" have entered the lexicon of gamers everywhere—along with the likes of "Boss," "lens flare" and "texture-mapped polygons." As evidence of the growing popularity of hockey sims, we offer four power players, all of which have been released this season.

EA Sports: NHL '97

EA Sports has dominated the hockey sim market like Montreal dominated the '50s from its very first release, NHL Hockey, which, along with its follow-up, NHLPA, revolutionized the entire market, transforming hockey sims much as EA's John Madden Football series reinvented gridiron video games. It is ironic, therefore, that NHL '97 (EA Sports/PS/Saturn/Genesis) will almost certainly disappoint gamers who've seen the other next-gen ice bashers. For the first time in the history of the franchise, this game attempts to fix what is not broken, radically departing from previous incarnations in its visual presentation. The angled, two-thirds perspective that made the game so popular has been replaced with a variety of trendy, on-the-ice camera POVs which are often awkward and somewhat ragged. Moreover, the puck's the size of a Frisbee, shots seem to have no steam on them at all (even when they're reported at 90 mph), and when the camera pulls back on long shots, it becomes extremely difficult to track individual players. On the upside, however, the game makes unprecedented progress in the simulation of individual players, replicating everything from the way in which a player dekes (ie, fakes) to their distinctive wrist shot or slapper. This is also the most physical hockey game ever seen; whereas most sims focus on fancy skating and dumbfounding dekes, NHL '97 is a real grinder up against the boards—even when more wide open teams compete against one another. A final comment, however, is required regarding the Genesis version of NHL '97, which takes great liberties with what has always been a solid, realistic simulation. Goaltenders, for example, are now transformed into literal brick walls when they have a hot hand. This attempt to mimic arcade-style contests like NBA Jam just doesn't mesh with EA Sports' classic style.









Virgin/ESPN: Power Play

Power Play/ESPN Hockey (Virgin-ESPN Sports/Saturn, PS and PC), meanwhile, which acquired the ESPN license at the eleventh hour (too late for Virgin to even get the famous cable sports logo on the package), has been largely ignored by the gaming press and gamers alike. This is unfortunate, since it's arguably the best hockey simulation on the market, with spectacular graphics, variable camera angles (with extremely smooth and natural transitions) and a spectacular sense of bringing the player down on the ice. And the replay interface is absolutely brilliant, allowing plays to be reviewed from literally any point and any angle on the ice. All three SKUs of this game are solid, but the Saturn and PlayStation versions are absolutely killer.





One caveat regarding the EA and Virgin games, though: the EA Sports' design is player-based while the Virgin/ESPN model is team based. The bottom line: the Avalanche, Rangers, Red Wings, etc. seen in Power Play operate more like the real teams than the EA Sports versions do. In Power Play, team AI is built around that team's style and tendencies, whereas EA's teams are comprised of individually created player surrogates. The downside of the Power Play format, however, is its inability to deal with player trades, since each player has been customized to function only as a component within its macro-team model. Whether this distinction is of major or minor significance depends entirely on the gamer's priorities.

Sony: NHL Face Off

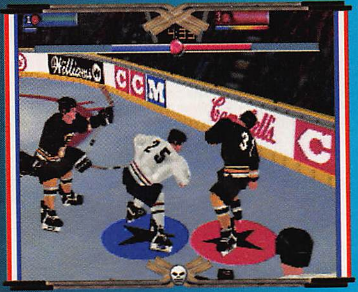
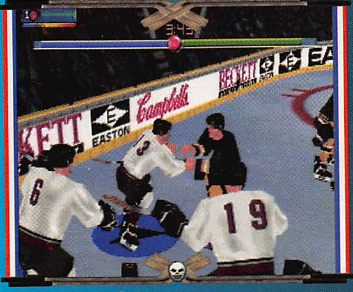
Since Sega Sports' own Saturn-based hockey sim (released early in the system's life) was a total washout, gamers are dependent on the EA and Virgin programs to satisfy their hockey jones. Sony and Nintendo, on the other glove, have produced their own first-rate on-ice sims. NHL Face Off '97 (Sony/PS) is a smooth, realistic contest that is taking off like a Jagr slapshot in sales. The game offers a quartet of camera angles and, like its aforementioned competitors, all 26 NHL teams, players and logos. The POVs tend to keep much of the rink on screen, thereby rendering the players smaller than those seen in the on-the-ice oriented Virgin and EA Sports hockey games, but the game has a great look and feel, the only complaint being that the computer AI, especially on the goalies, is weak.






Midway: Wayne Gretzky's 3D Hockey

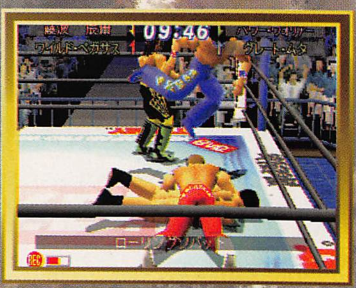
Gamers less interested in stats and technical realism than in a visceral, arcade-style hockey experience in the tradition of the aforementioned NBA Jam could do no better than Wayne Gretzky Hockey (Midway/N64). The game offers both a three-on-three arcade mode (complete with sizzling slapshots that incinerate the goal twine after roaring past the net-minder) and a "simulation" format. The latter may well prove unsatisfying to hardcore hockey nuts, but even the most hidebound traditionalist will devour the eye candy, complete with beautifully modeled and animated players, and Fox TV-style trailing lasers which follow the puck as it screams up and down the rink.

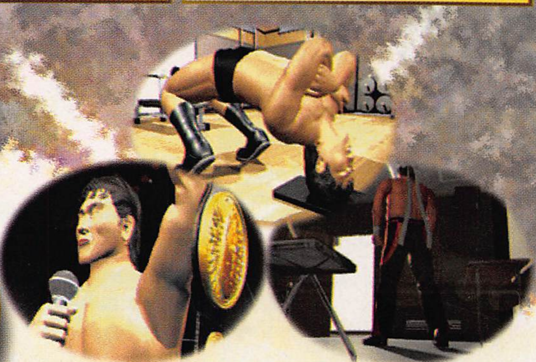

In short, life is sweet for video and computer game fans of the world's fastest team sport. And, with each passing season, it's likely to get sweeter. So pop me a brew and pass the back bacon, eh? Looks like Messier is gonna shoot! *BK*

GAME	REALISM	ACTION FACTOR	AUDIO/VISUALS	SPECIAL FEATURES	TRADES	TOTAL (Out of 40)
NHL '97	7	6	7	9	YES	29
Power Play	9	8	8	7	NO	32
Gretzky 3D	6	10	8	7	NO	31
Face Off '97	8	8	8	7	YES	31



新日本プロレスリング 闘魂烈伝2



TOUKON RETSUDEN 2





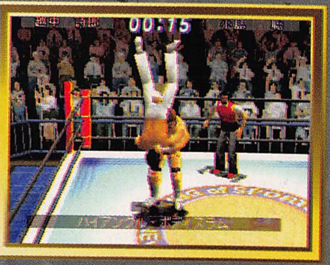
Toukon Retsuden 2 is a hot sequel. The original wasn't exactly begging for improvement, but Tomy and Yukes went way beyond expectations and created a stunning sequel—easily re-establishing their product as the top wrestling game available.

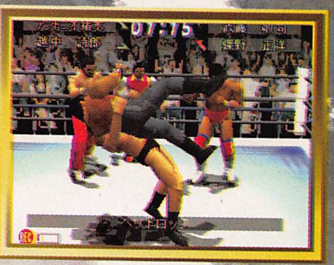
For starters, if everything else about this game was bad, I'd still buy it for the incredible graphics. Mind blowing animation, 30 fps, and giant wrestlers without a hint of slowdown. The textures are hyper-detailed, perfectly gouraud shaded, and the polygon count is high. Even light-sourcing, as camera flashes brighten the ring and reflect off the wrestlers, has found its way into the sequel. And since everything else about this game *isn't* bad, the wicked eye candy is just the tip of the iceberg.

The gameplay in *TR2* is *so* good. Although it only takes a few simple motions to snare your foe into a brutal move (such as holding up and pressing □, for a neck-breaker), it takes timing, a little cunning, and persistent battering. You'll also have to make complete use of the 3D ring, and the go *anywhere* freedom of movement that it allows. I say all it takes is one game against a buddy to check out all the amazing moves, trash each other, and you'll be hooked.

O.K., bear with me, it's time for stats and modes: There are 18 wrestlers, three weight classes, several perspectives and venues, multiple IWGP league play modes, training, and two to four player (simultaneous) matches. Great options, 'nuff said.

Can any other wrestling game touch *Toukon Retsuden 2*? No way. It's such an impressive mix of awesome polygonal graphics and hot 3D gameplay, with all the fringes, PS effects, and options. Good news: If the import's out of reach, it'll be on its way here soon enough. Either way, keep your eyes peeled for the best wrestler ever. ***JS***





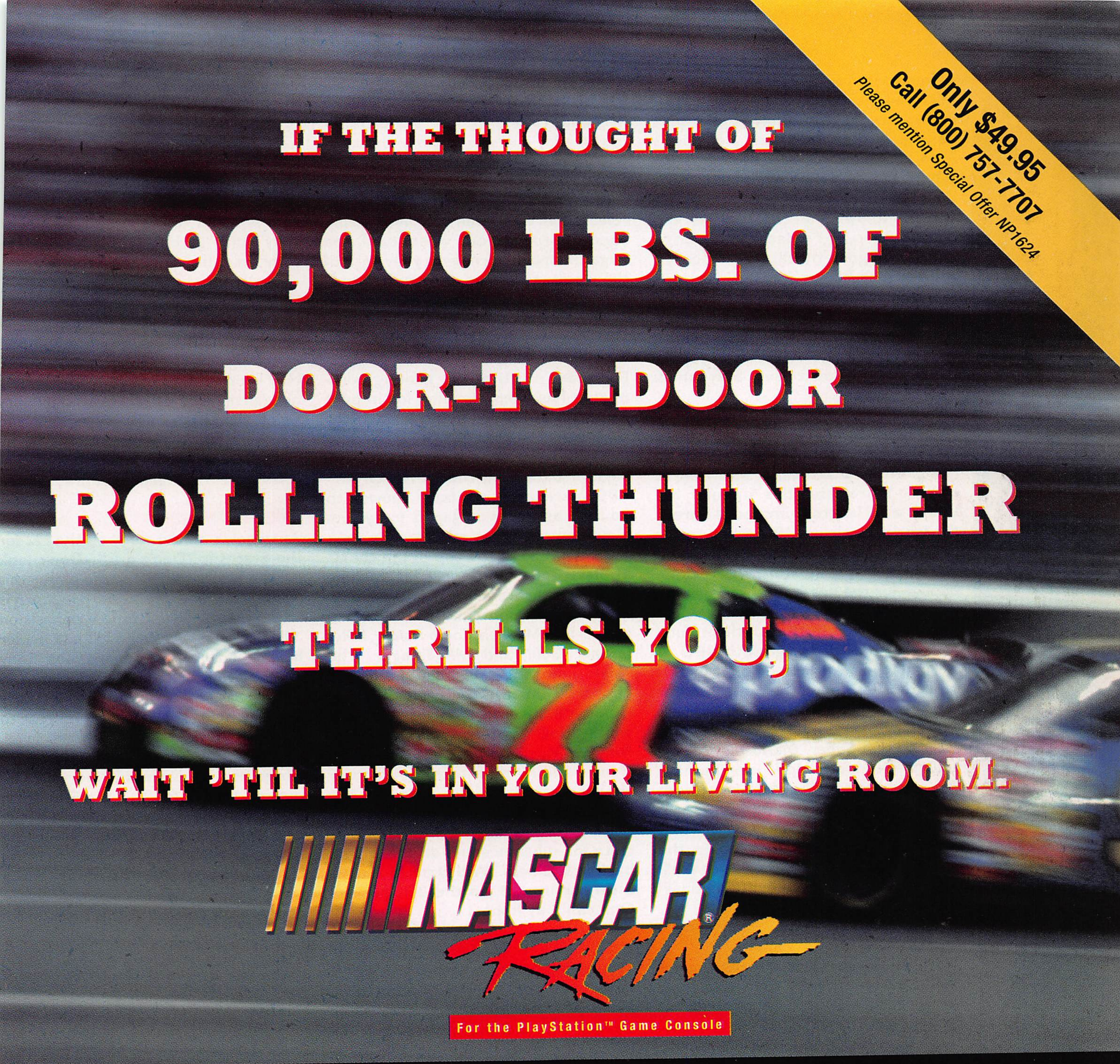

R REVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - YUKES	# OF PLAYERS - 1-4
PUBLISHER - TOMY	DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - NOW JAPAN



JACQUES STRAP
Hot sequel!

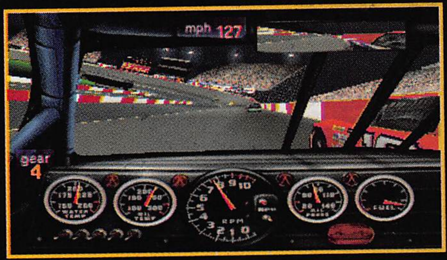


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Random Access

by E. Storm

REBELLION RETURNS...

Anyone who even remotely remembers the Atari Jaguar whether they owned one or not surely remembers its single most hyped game, Rebellion's *Alien Vs. Predator*. Well, I'm elated to report that work on a PS version by Rebellion is well underway. While this version allows you to play as the Marine, Alien, or Predator as the original did, it goes much, much deeper. Besides new Aliens (for Resurrection's sake?) *AVP* will offer more polygons, smoother 3D, lighting effects, brilliant texture maps and new weapons. We should have some screens for you by the close of the next issue. Stay tuned.

SPAWNING SEQUELS

Not only is Todd McFarlane's *Spawn* in development for the Sony PlayStation, (a supreme 3D action/adventure we're told) to be released this Summer, but there's a full length animated feature in the works, to air on HBO, and a major live-action motion picture as well!

"The animated feature wasn't tame enough for the networks," sources say, and so rather than stray from the path that put *Spawn* in the spotlight Todd McFarlane decided to go with HBO. A brilliant choice in the opinion of this reporter. Let's hope the same goes for the theatrical release. We've all seen what can happen when a story goes astray (see *Super Mario-the Movie*, and/or *The Mask*). *Mario* used humans (big mistake) and The Mask went from comically violent, to comically challenged. Jim Carrey, uh, carried that show. A *Mask* sequel is also in the works, directed by (insert name) We'll have to wait and see if lightning doesn't strike twice.

TUROK ME AGAIN PLEASE...

Work on *Turok 2* has already begun! Assured by magazines the world over, I'm sure, that they've got a mega hit on their hands, Iguana has started conceptual work on a sequel to be released around the same time next year. No word yet on whether *T2* will be cart or 64DD Disc. We'll keep you posted as the info comes in.

CHANNELING:

The Sega Channel recently announced three significant changes to its programming plans for 1997. The lineup of games offered will now change every two weeks, instead of monthly, increasing the total package to over 70 games a month. They've also signed a licensing agreement with Disney Interactive for the cable rights to the games *Aladdin*, *Gargoyles*, and *Tailspin*, along with *Maui Mallard in Cold Shadow*, of which a Genesis version isn't yet available at retail. SC will also continue its Prize-O-Rama. During January and February subscribers will have the chance to win a Kawasaki KX 80, Mitsubishi 32" color TV or an Aiwa Surround Sound Home Theatre. SC has been offering exclusive titles like *Pulseman* (a fine import platformer I might add) and *Power Drive* throughout '96. The new "Test Drive" section allows subscribers to play games that are new to the market or currently unreleased as well. Call your local cable operator to find out when, or if, the Sega channel is coming to your neck of the woods so you to re-visit those 16-bit days 24 hours a day.

VICTORY FOR RPG PLAYERS EVERYWHERE!

For years much of the gaming community has been pleading for import RPGs to be localized and brought to the states faster and in greater quantity. For some reason, be it lame surveys, or data from those "Marts" the RPG market has not been allowed to flourish as it has in Japan for years. However, upon its release, Konami's *Suikoden* rose to the top of the charts at Electronics Boutique, a high-profile chain which caters to console gamers. An RPG at number 1! Ahead of games like *Madden*, *Tomb Raider*, *Killer Instinct Gold*, and *MK Trilogy*. The week following, *Suikoden* held and appeared in the number 2 spot. Could this be the omen we've been waiting for? Surely, *Wild Arms*, *Saga Frontier*, *Magic Night Rayearth*, *Vandal Hearts*, and *Final Fantasy VII* will enjoy similar results as they are all top notch RPGs. This could spark a trend and before you know it gamers with a taste for substance and drama will be back in business. Will *Dracula X* have a similar impact on the 2D market? One can only hope...

YER FREAKIN' ME OUT...

Wondering what happened to Virgin's *Freak Boy*? Well, so were we. It turns out the designers weren't 100% pleased with the shape the game was taking, so *Freak Boy* is in the shop receiving a major overhaul. I'm sure it's for the best. Look for *Freak Boy* to appear later this Summer or early winter. It better be freakin' great stuff!

SPEAKING OF DELAYS...

Haven't seen much of *Robotech* lately, or for that matter, *Body Harvest*. We've received no official word on *Robotech* but in *Body Harvest*'s case word is that Miyamoto had a look and requested some graphical changes. Supposedly he's had a hand in the games development. We're surely in for an amazing game under those circumstances. Don't hold your breath, though. It's gonna' be a hot Summer!

Yoshi's Island has again been moved. First it went from January (these release dates are Japan) to March and now it has slipped on to the dreaded unknown list. *Blast Corps* has slipped as well, going from January to March. I see a pattern forming. In the *Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire* case, the Japanese version has been moved from March to June as Miyamoto's play testers suggested changes take place. Tighter control will surely be offered in the import version. No word yet on what else they'll change, but June's a ways off so they must be up to something.

EIDOS COMES ON STRONG...

Jon Romero (the original creator of *Doom*), has started a new development company: Ion Storm. 3D Realms' Tom Hall is on board as well. We're talking big talent here folks. In mid-January Eidos signed the new developer and will publish titles for the PC, and home consoles. Which games and which consoles were not available at press time.

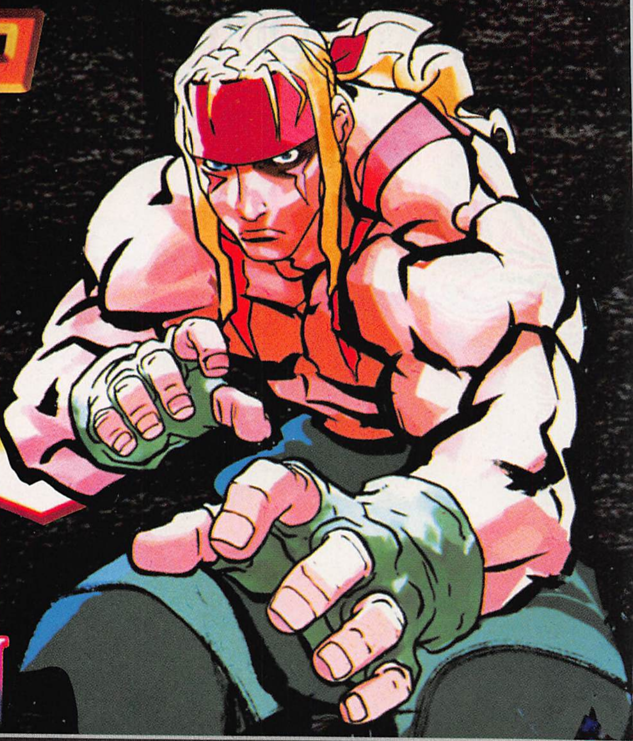
THE M2... WHEN?

Panasonic's official word on the M2 for the States is "Don't ask." Don't look for the Japanese DVD/game player this year either. The official word in Japan is late '97/early '98 with the emphasis on '98. Being so far off, the M2 had better be one blazing piece of hardware. Sony and Sega both have new machines in the pipeline that could appear as early as 1999, giving the M2 only one year to reign supreme on a hardware level. Third party support is another matter altogether. Question is, who won't be making games for the PlayStation in 1998? The signing of Square and Enix has all but sealed a victory for the PlayStation overseas. It's likely that the M2 will be marketed as more than a mere game console. They'd better hope it waxes floors at this rate.

THE INTERNET... 2?

Plans have begun, by the originators of the internet, on its successor, the Internet 2. It seems the people who created the net (college professors, for the most part) can no longer use it to the extent they need, due to heavy traffic and the general overload of sorts that is currently taking place. It's well publicized that upon lowering their monthly fee, the flood of new subscribers literally froze AOL, who is now working frantically to carry the load and appease the mass of new users. Waiting times are far too long currently and it's only going to get worse as the net continues to expand. The Internet 2 will have a faster bandwidth and next-gen servers and is currently being funded by over 90 Universities. Plans are to have it up and running in approximately 2 years. For the internet to succeed in the mainstream, instant access is a must. People do not like to wait for their entertainment. Imagine clicking on *Seinfeld* and the screen reading, "The server is not available"

Street Fighter III
New Generation





It's been a full six years since *Street Fighter II: The World Warrior* hit the arcade scene and changed video gaming forever. There are those that argue that the fighting game genre was just waiting to be born; anybody could have been first to start the frenzy. Somehow, I just don't believe that. Did *Fatal Fury*, the second fighting game to be released (which actually began development before *SFII* came out) spark the same kind of manic passion that *SF* did? For that matter, has ANY arcade game in the last half-decade reached the giddy heights of *SFII*?

How can Capcom hope to follow up such a revolution? How about a game running on brand-new 32-bit hardware with literally four times as many animation frames than its predecessor, gorgeous vertically scrolling backgrounds that change every round, and nine all-new, never-before-seen fighters? If anything could be a worthy successor to *The World Warrior*, *New Generation* is it.

We can't say much about the gameplay, as the game is far from complete, but rest assured you can jump right into the *New Generation* if you're a *Street Fighter* fan. Rumors of two-in-ones being removed proved false, and the fighting system remains largely the same. There are several game-changing new features, however, which you can read about on the right.



We'll save gameplay comments for the review, but I must talk about the graphics. You've never seen anything like this before. Still shots do the game zero justice—*SFIII* is to 2-D what *VF3* is to 3-D: This is the most animated game ever. The characters are so beautiful that it's almost hard to describe... imagine Disney smoothness with actual shading, as opposed to wide bands of single color. Every fold of every uniform is rendered with shocking attention to detail. No 2-D, hand-drawn game on the planet can compare. It's that simple. For now, read all about the new systems and the characters on the following pages. There's more *SFIII* to come in **GF**! ***NR***



SIX YEARS SINCE SFII, CAN CAPCOM RECAPTURE THE MAGIC?





THE NEW SYSTEMS OF STREET FIGHTER III



Like every other *SF* before it, *III* is chock-full of new gameplay innovations. At first glance some of them may seem questionable, but looks can be deceiving... all of the following new systems have the potential to become indispensable *Street Fighter* mainstays. Also, please remember that all of the information below is based on a 60% version of the game.

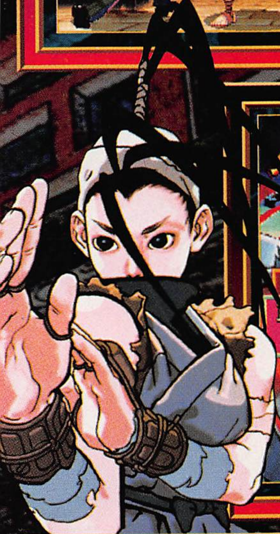


PARRYING

Parrying is basically an offensive block, and is extremely difficult to do. The motion is a **tap forward** for a high Parry, and **tap down** for a low Parry. This sounds insanely simple, but nothing will happen (i.e. you'll walk forward a step or duck for a second) unless you are at point-blank range and you do it within the first few frames of the opponent's attack. You can even Parry in the air!









SUPER ARTS SELECT

In the *Alpha* series, each character had at least two supers. In *III*, each character has three of them, but you can only select one before the match begins. Super meters and the max level of super vary wildly; Sean can hold six supers at once and his gauge is tiny. The reason for this is that his supers are extremely weak. Some characters take an insanely long time to charge up and have a maximum of one super charged at a time, because their Super Arts are extremely powerful.



SUPER CANCEL

Street Fighter III features a new system whereby one can two-in-one a super into a special move. For example: Ken can do Jumping Fierce, Low Fierce, Fierce Shoryuken, then **two-in-one off the Shoryuken** into a Shoryu Reppa. This is similar to *Street Fighter EX*'s Super Cancels. It's fairly easy to do for seasoned players; far simpler than doing a straight super two-in-one. Besides this addition, the combo system largely remains the same.



DASHING

SFIII is the first *Street Fighter* to feature dashing, a mainstay of almost every other 2-D fighting game. They are accomplished in the traditional manner: a double-tap. The dashes in *Street Fighter III* are very fast, but don't cover much ground. One can theorize that the addition of dashing to *SF* will add a whole new level to cheaps and foot games.

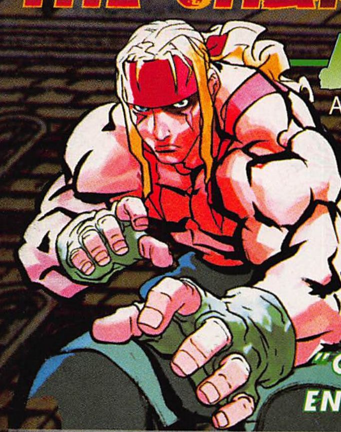




OTHERS

Besides Parrying, Super Arts Select, Super Cancel and Dashing, *SFIII* has a number of innovations/changes. The first and most obvious change is the **removal of air blocking**, returning a massive element of strategy to the *SF* series. Also, **each character now has a top-down**/overhead attack accomplished by pressing down, down and a button. There are **multiple heights of jumps** performed like Rolento's high jump in *SFA2*. Finally, some characters have **"launcher"-type moves** that set up juggle combos like Gen's Kiryu/Hateful-style low short in *Alpha 2*. They aren't nearly as wacky as in the *X-Men* series, however.

THE CHARACTERS OF STREET FIGHTER III



ALEX

Alex is a streetwise youth from Manhattan who's searching for the man who defeated his mentor, Tom. He has the Power Bomb, a command throw, the Flash Chop, which stops fireballs, a stomp like Bison, and a mid-air catch move like Rose. He has one super that goes over fireballs (accompanied by a rousing cry of "Two can play at that game!") that, when it hits, dizzies. It takes ages to charge, however, and you can only have one stored at a time. Alex is considered to be the new main character of the game.



"OVER ALREADY? YOU'RE NOT GOOD ENOUGH TO BE MY SPARRING PARTNER!"



RYU



Ryu still seeks the true meaning of fighting. In *Street Fighter III*, Ryu can no longer two-in-one off of his low Roundhouse, eliminating a favorite push-away tactic that's been used for years. He can no longer do the Tatsumaki Sempuu Kyaku in the air. His new fireball super, Denjin Hadoken, can be charged up for several seconds by holding the button down after doing the double-fireball motion. You can see it coming a mile away, but if it hits at max power it's not only unblockable but it dizzies! His other new super, Shin Shoryuken, is just a super uppercut.

"FOR ME, THE ONLY THINGS THAT EXIST IN THIS WORLD ARE MY FISTS!"

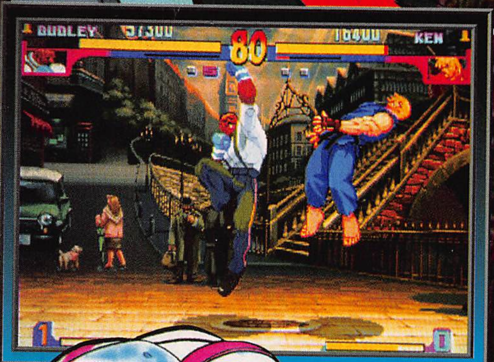


YUN & YANG

Yun & Yang are twin brothers, masters of Chinese Kempo. They are seen as young leaders of their small part of Hong Kong. They are identical; Yun is chosen with Punch and Yang with Kick. They have Senkyutai, a rolling kick uppercut, Zenpo Tenshin, a move that flips you over the opponent, giving you a split second to combo, Zessho Hoho, a stepping punch, a downward-thrusting kick like Chun-Li's Falcon-Claw kick and a Super Arts that increases your speed!



"WE MUST BECOME STRONGER AND STRONGER...!"



DUDLEY



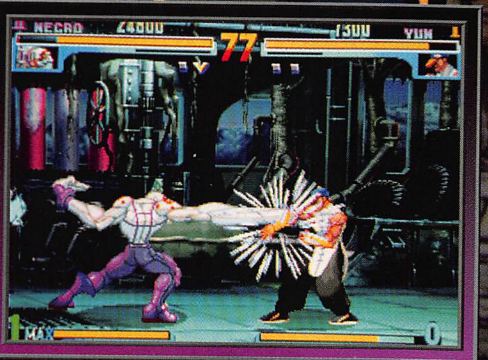
Dudley comes from a distinguished British sporting family, and is an wealthy heavyweight boxer. He has very strange moves—besides his uppercut, he has a move which makes him quickly duck under high attacks. After doing this move, pressing P or K will have different results. Another of his moves, the Machine Gun Blow, is similar to E. Honda's Hyakuretsu Harite. He has a move called Cross Counter which acts like an Alpha counter, but it's initiated before an attack connects. The enemy gets pummeled but Dudley also takes damage.

"4:00... IT'S HIGH TEA. CARE FOR A SPOT? DARJEELING OR EARL GREY?"



NECRO

Necro is a Russian punk who was wrongfully experimented on and DNA-enhanced. He's now searching for the man who altered him. Necro is animated so well, and is, like, flying all over the place, and stuff, that he's REALLY hard to play. Two Necros on-screen can be incredibly distracting. Besides his Dhalsim-ish stretching limbs, he can do the Blanka-like Electromagnetic Blast, several command throws, and the Tornado Hook, a rotating punch move. In the words of the immortal L.A. Akira, "Necro's like a cross between Dhalsim and Victor."



"DON'T... DON'T STAND IN FRONT OF ME! I'LL RIP YOU TO SHREDS!!"



iBUKi



Ibuki is a normal Japanese high school girl, but she was born and raised in a secret Ninja training facility which has been operating since the Warring States Period. She's insanely fast and incredibly versatile. She has a mid-air kunai-toss that travels at several angles like Rolento's Stinger, Koho, a short-range fireball on the ground, an uppercut with kick, Kubiori, a command throw that snaps your neck, Hien, an air kick, and a three-move sequence with kick like Fei-Long's Rekka Ken. She may wind up being a *very* high-ranked fighter in *SFIII*.

"REMEMBER THIS BATTLE! YOU HAVE WITNESSED THE POWER OF THE SHINOBI!"



ELENA

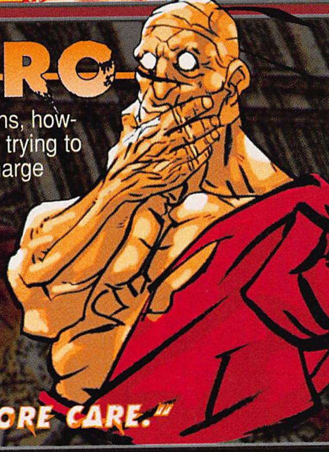


Elena is the daughter of an African tribal leader. She has studied in France, so she's well-cultured. She has extremely long range, and only uses her legs. She has a kick uppercut, Scratch Wheel, an overhead like Chun-Li's Sen'enshuu, Mallet Smash, and a two-hit kick called Rhino Horn. She even has a super which actually refills your life by about a fourth of the bar! The second form of her stage (after an eagle zooms straight into the camera and cuts the wires holding the log you're fighting on) has another log just behind you on which two other people are fighting.

"WE COULD BE GREAT FRIENDS! DON'T YOU AGREE?"



ORO

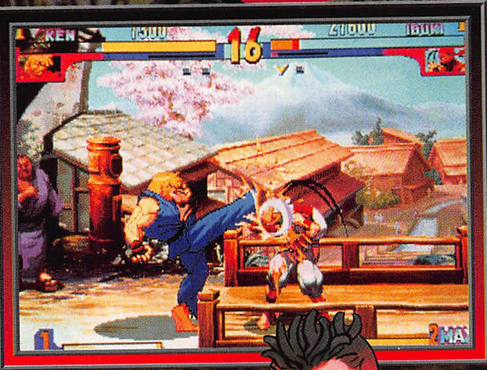


Oro is a 140-year-old hermit living in the Amazon. His origins, however, are unknown. He feels his time is coming near and is trying to find a pupil. Moreover, he has ONE ARM! He's the only charge character in the game. He has an uppercut and a kick that travels straight down in the air, and his fireball, Nichirinsho, can travel at several angles. He has the coolest supers in the game, too: One actually takes objects from whatever background you're on (Whether they're boomboxes from New York, street signs from Hong Kong, or just plain boulders from the Amazon) and surrounds himself with them.

"POOR NAÏF... CHOOSE YOUR OPPONENTS WITH MORE CARE."



KEN



Ken now lives on the west coast with Eliza and his 3-year-old son Mel. Since Ken had a child, he and Ryu have grown apart. He has since made a promise with Eliza that he'll only enter tournaments that Ryu is in. Ken is very similar to Ryu as far as drastic changes go... he has no air hurricane kick and can't two-in-one his low roundhouse. He has one new super, the Shippu Jinrai Kyaku, which is basically several standing kicks followed by a Tatsumaki Sempuu Kyaku.

"IT'S ALL ABOUT SENSE! VICTORY IS HOLLOW UNLESS YOU WIN WITH STYLE!"



SEAN



Sean is Ken's student. He has not mastered the techniques of Hadoken, Shoryuken or Tatsumaki Sempuu Kyaku yet; consequently, he uses his own rough versions of each. He has the Dragon Smash, an uppercut like the Shoryuken, except he tags on an extra mid-air punch at the end, the Sean Tackle, which goes under fireballs, the Tornado, which is very similar to Dan's Dankuukyaku, and the Ryubikyaku, which goes up in the air, hangs, then comes down. He has Hado Burst, a super fireball, and Shoryu Cannon, a super uppercut, but they aren't much more powerful than Ryu and Ken's regular ones.

"SHORYU REPPA...! NEXT TIME... NEXT TIME I'LL PERFECT IT!!"

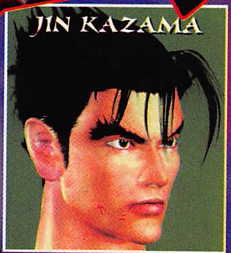
GAMEFAN UP-TO-THE-NANOSECOND UPDATE!!

TEKKEN 3™



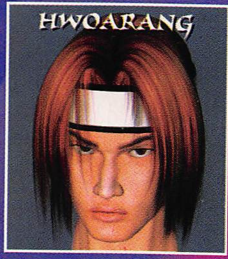




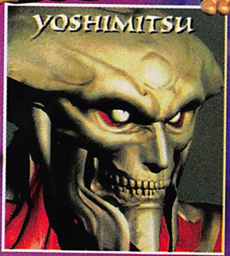


More information on Namco's latest Rave War tournament has finally been uncovered!! Here, in no particular order, are the finer points for nine of the combatants in the third Iron Fist competition. We'll have much more in the coming issues, but for now, here's how *Tekken 3* is shaping up, 19 years on...

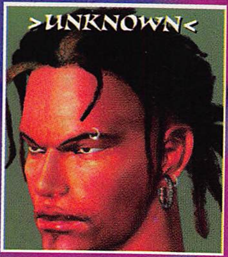
A new fighter called Jin Kazama (aka 'Lightning of Destiny') has arrived. The son of Jun Kazama and Kazuya Mishima, he found out about Kazuya's past atrocities at age 15, just as his mother passed away. To overcome his sorrow, he spent time in training with Heihachi. To Jin, Heihachi is a grandfather and a teacher. Now, Jin has turned 19 and acquired phenomenal techniques of Kazama-ryu Jujitsu and Mishima-ryu Kenka karate.



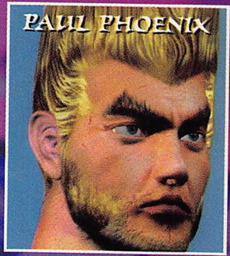
Next is Hwoarang, a possible alternative character to Baek Doo San. In *Tekken 2*, Baek had many kicking attacks, such as the Hunting Hawk and Heel Explosion. Among these three techniques, only Heel Explosion can be seen in *Tekken 3* as part of Hwoarang's ensemble. This youngster certainly looks like he's mastered all facets of Tae Kwon Do, however.



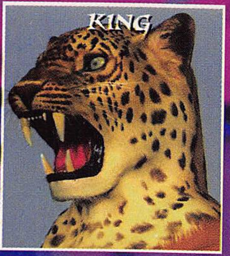
Xioyu, the girl with the longest neck of any *T3* character, is something of a dark horse, but she looks to share many of Michelle's techniques, along with many jumping attacks. So far, all the attacking movements in *Tekken* series seem to have been ground-oriented when it comes to the crucial tactics of a game. By looking at the pics, some GameFan folk suspect that there should be more aerial fights between characters in this time.



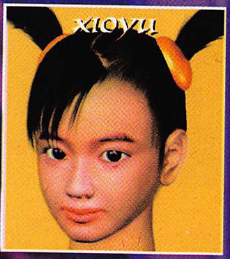
Of course, ol' coif boy makes it back into *Tekken 3*. Last time, Paul failed to win the tournament (Kuma savaged him). After this, Paul began practicing aikido to learn to style of Nina. Now, Paul has become a renowned martial artist, admired by children throughout the world. Although he has won the first prize in many tournaments, he has started to feel that something is lacking in his life. In the spring, at the age of 46, Paul receives a letter, which contains information about "The King of Iron First Tournament 3." He has never skipped training and he feels confident (er, for a third time). No way he is going lose the tournament... again.



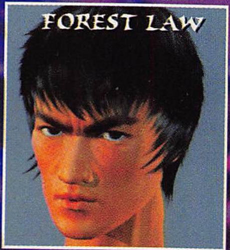
Fans of Marshall Law will be excited to discover that his son, Forest Law ('Dragon of Reviving Fire') has been training at his father's dojo, but was prohibited to enter any tournaments with others. Paul comes to practice with Marshall Law every three months and comes by again, but he does not see Marshall since he has been out of town for the construction of his new dojo. Paul persuades Forest to leave the dojo, and a blissfully unaware Forest doesn't realize he's headed for the *Tekken 3* competition...



The Chinese supercop puts down his pension book and draws his beretta; he's back! During the last tournament, Lei almost nabs Bruce, but the kickboxer escaped after a plane crash. Lei spent the intervening years solving many international crimes. All international crime syndicates are afraid of him. However, strange incidents become rampant. Leading martial artists have started to disappear one after another. One day, Heihachi visits Lei and asks him to enter the tournament. Lei does not understand why Heihachi asks him to enter the tournament, but he is finally persuaded by Heihachi words, "Everything will be understood if you enter the tournament."



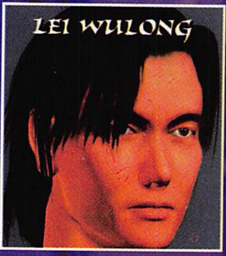
An all-new King has also arrived (the first King died at the hands of Armor King). This King ('Anger of the Beast') doesn't know this, and enters the tournament with Armor King to defeat and kill another new opponent, Toshin. Toshin has been framed for King's death by Armor King. What a nasty piece of work.

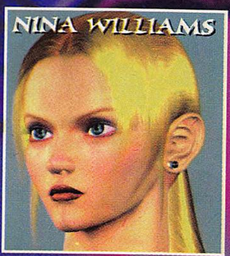


There's a reason Nina looks so young after 19 years; she's been placed into a Cold Sleep Machine, developed by Dr Bosconovitch (Yoshimitsu's scientist). Both Anna and Nina have slept for 15 years. Heihachi's troops (the 'Tekken shu') succeed in excavating Toshin (no information on him), and Toshin's psychic waves wake up Nina. Under the control of Toshin, she tries to kill Jin Kazama in a Sarah Bryant plotline extravaganza.

Lastly, Yoshimitsu is back; this time looking really, really scary. Apparently, his scientist, Bosconovitch, has started a research on eternal youth and a wake to wake his daughter (his daughter has been kept in the cold sleep machine). Yoshimitsu, as the boss of Manji-tou, has been helping poor people and financing Bosconovitch projects. One day, Yoshimitsu hears of the disappearing world-renowned martial artists, and goes to Bosconovitch's lab, but finds him infected with an unknown virus. Bosconovitch tells Yoshimitsu that he needs the blood of Toshin to obtain eternal life and rescue his daughter. Yoshimitsu decides to enter the tournament to help Bosconovitch...







Confused? Yes, we all are, and we're still no nearer to finding out how the actual game controls. From what we've seen, this is essentially souped-up visuals and gameplay with 3D backgrounds (*a la Virtua Fighter 2*), and we're salivating with excitement at the prospect to taking this game apart. Watch this space for further information. Just how much hair will Heihachi have left this time...? *CH and W*



NEWS

Enix Announces PlayStation Development... Is Dragon Quest VII on the Way?

On January 9th, Enix announced that they had signed a third party agreement with Sony Computer Entertainment of Japan. This marks the first time in the company's history that they will be developing for a non-Nintendo system, and is a major turning point in the Japanese video game industry.

Enix's corporate stance has always been that they will support whichever system is dominant, and Enix stated only the PlayStation's strong market diffusion as the reason for the decision. While Enix will con-inue their Nintendo 64 development, it seems likely that *ragon Quest*, far and way Enix's most powerful license, will e coming to the PlayStation. Despite rumors that the *Dragon Quest* series was Saturn-bound, Enix responded to inquiries about Saturn development only by stating that they are not a aturn third party.

Enix has announced only that they have begun PlayStation development, and refused to announce either titles or genres. But *Dragon Quest* is rumored to be an absolute certainty, especially considering Enix's past commitment to develop the game on whichever system is most prevalent (The PlayStation now holds nearly 60% of the Japanese video game marketplace).

In related news, *Dragon Quest* producer Yuji Horii confirmed that *Dragon Quest VII* development would soon begin (he also declined to name the system), and that the game should take about a year to make, placing a release in March of next year. Game details are vague, but Horii promises a game that will "blur the line between RPGs and adventure games... a new game that will make people who have played previous *Dragon Quest*s wonder, 'Is this really Dragon Quest?'"

It could be many months before *DQVII*'s platform is announced, but it's a virtual certainty that the announcement of a PlayStation *Dragon Quest* would solidify the PlayStation's position as Japan's dominant video game platform.

New Peripheral Makes Saturn Video Phone Compatible

Sega and NTT, Japan's phone company, have announced the joint development of a "Pheonix" video phone peripheral. The device plugs into the Saturn cartridge slot, and has a camera and microphone built into the top.

In addition to being able to communicate with the six or seven other people who own video phones worldwide, NTT and Sega have all sorts of wild plans for interactive video phone schools and stuff, like on those old AT&T commercials. Sega hopes the system will have wide appeal, and plans to sell it for as little as 30,000 yen ($260).

Square Announces Next Final Fantasy Title

Perhaps in an attempt to dispel the wide-spread rumor that a *Final Fantasy 1* remake was imminent on the PlayStation, SquareSoft Japan has made the somewhat baffling announcement of a Spring release of a PlayStation *Final Fantasy IV* (*Final Fantasy II* here in the states).

The game uses all of the graphics of the original (meaning that it still looks like a 1991 Super Famicom game), but some poorly rendered characters have been shown that would seem to suggest that the game will at least have a new CG intro. Rumors of a new CD soundtrack (!) are also flying, but Square has yet to make further comment of the title. Whatever.

BioHazard Headed to Saturn, BioHazard II Delayed

Mixed news for *BioHazard* (*Resident Evil*) fans this week, as Capcom confirmed the speculation that *BioHazard* was coming to the Saturn, but also announced a delay for the heavily anticipated *BioHazard II*.

No details were available on the Saturn version of *BioHazard*, save that it would be released this spring. Capcom had previously said that if they did do *BioHazard* on the Saturn, they would make sure to add new elements. Although these could be as subtle as new costumes and weapons, there is some hopeful speculation that the Saturn version could end up being *BioHazard Dash*, the semi-sequel to *BioHazard 1* that was scrapped in favor of *BioHazard II* on the PlayStation.

BioHazard II, which Capcom had long since intended to release on the March anniversary of *BioHazard 1*, has now been delayed until this summer. It is not known if the two items are simply a coincidence, or if the delay is because Capcom is concentrating on finishing the Saturn version of *BH1* first.

More N64 Delays Shigeru Miyamoto Hopes for 50 Titles by Year End

A few more software delays for the Nintendo 64 were announced this month: Both *Yoshi's Island* and *Kirby's Air Race* are no longer planned for Summer and Spring respectively; both titles now have no expected release date. *StarFox* has been delayed from March to Late April, and *Mother 3* may have slipped into an early 1998 release.

Despite these setbacks, Shigeru Miyamoto told Japanese magazine Famitsu that Nintendo plans to release at least one game every 2 or 3 months, and that if all goes well, the N64 will have 50 games (counting third-party titles) by the end of 1997. Miyamoto is currently at work on *StarFox 64*, which he hopes to make into a "B Sci-Fi movie that anyone can play." His personal goal for the year is to ensure that "99% of those who bought a Nintendo 64 will be happy they did."

Final (?) Samurai Spirits RPG Details Announced, "Fencing Instructor Pack" planned for PlayStation

SNK's long delayed *Samurai Spirits* (*Shodown*) RPG, due for the Neo•Geo CD, Saturn, and PlayStation, is finally nearing completion. The double disc Neo•CD version will be released on March 28th, for 6800 yen (about $60). SNK swears that this will be the final release date for *Samurai Spirits Bushido Retsuden*, a game that's been delayed for well over a year.

One major change in SNK's plans is that the three versions will no longer be different: SNK originally developed three completely different scenarios for the *Samurai* RPG, and two of these scenarios would be on each version, forcing gamers to buy copies on at least two different systems to have every scenario. Now all three versions will have the same two scenarios... As for the third, "we're saving it for the sequel," says SNK. Maybe they should just try to get that first one out... Anyway, the game will still feature cover art designed so that the whole image won't be revealed until the Saturn, PlayStation and Neo•CD versions are lined up, side-by-side. Otherwise, the three versions will now be basically identical, with only small changes in the graphics, sound, and text, as based on each system's abilities.

SNK has also announced that they will be shipping the *Samurai Spirits Fencing Instructor Pack*, for the PlayStation this March... It's basically just *Samurai Spirits 1* and *2* on a single PlayStation disc, complete with some bonus stuff, like sound rooms and training modes.

Suikoden II Announced! Suikoden 1 on Saturn!

And finally, humanity has just incurred one of its greatest triumphs with Konami's announcement that they will be bestowing upon us, the undeserving masses, a sequel to everyone's RPG of the year, *Genso Suikoden*. No details or shots have been released, but, really, what more need be said? *Suikoden II*. Also, the original *Suikoden* is in the process of being ported to the Saturn, so now everyone in possession of a 32-bit system (in Japan, at least), can taste the magic.

BATTLE らんま 1/2 RANMA RENAISSANCE

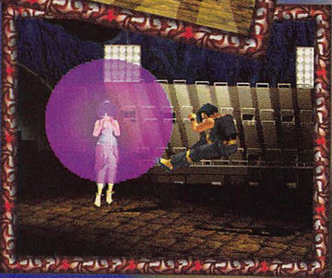












Once again, a new year comes and fans that have been waiting ages for a new *Ranma* fighting game can finally have peace of mind! I can actually say that this game is well done, and although this game isn't your *Tekken 2*, they have done a magnificent job for their first venture onto the 32-bit category.

The fighting system is actually pretty simple. One punch button, and one kick button. That's it! However, there is a meter below your life bar that when blocking or connecting hits, fills up eventually. This gauge allows you to perform insane combos and even unleash the famous trademark moves! And what *Ranma* game wouldn't be complete without their alter egos? Yep, the *Ranma* characters can change into the cute little animals! During a fight, you might run into a slight drizzle, so the feature of changing into their alter egos can give you the advantage or disadvantage during battle. Frankly, I think that just the simple fact Shampoo made it in this version of the game is reason enough to own it... heh heh.

There is also a pretty cool Story Mode, with complete CG endings for each and every character. After battling against all eight characters (and picking up hints on how to do desperation moves, etc.), you wage battle with the last boss Rouge to set things right once again on the island.

Not bad, eh? No really, *Ranma* is quite indeed a unique game and believe me, if the *Sailor Moon* game series sold shockingly well, then this game will undoubtedly sell much more. I know that there are indeed more *Ranma* fans out there, and all of you know it! Ha ha! So I'd better go seek cover before the *Sailor Moon* Coalition gets a bit unruly! *W*

















STORY MODE

R REVIEW

PlayStation

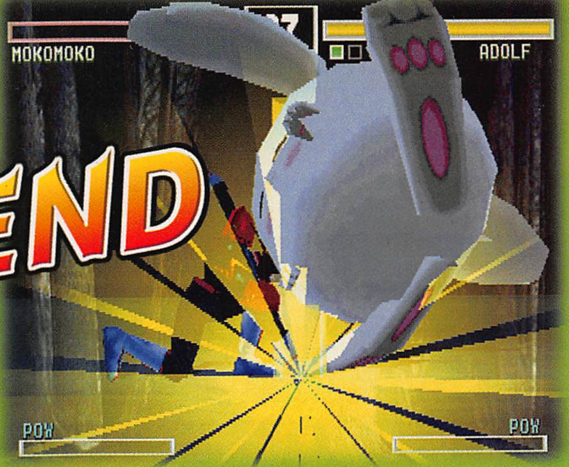
DEVELOPER - RUMIC SOFT	# OF PLAYERS - 1-2
PUBLISHER - SHOGAKUKAN PROD.	DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - NOW JAPAN

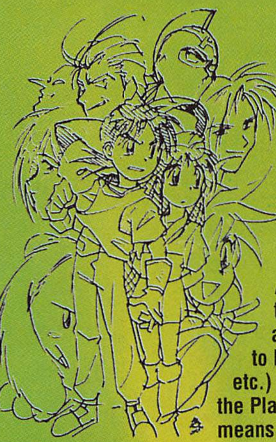


WAKA Finally, a step forward into the Ranma series... I think....

LIGHTNING LEGEND

DAIGO'S GREAT ADVENTURE





I don't like to admit it, but I have a fetish for fringe fighting games. I consider professional, high-end fighters like almost anything from Capcom and SNK games to play competitively... whacked-out, anime-infused borderline titles like *Flash Hiders*, *Asuka 120%* and *Lightning Legend* are just games to have fun against the CPU with, and I love 'em. They don't offer the precision feel of super-produced fighting games, but their emphasis on story and character design over gameplay is something I can appreciate.



I'm going to warn you now: I really like *Lightning Legend*. Almost everybody else at GF thought it was non-stop pap, so don't take my word as the Savior's. I may love it, but most people probably won't. It plays exactly like a 2-D fighting game (i.e. hold back to block, jumping is very fast, it has a 2-in-1 based combo system, etc.) and, in a unique and previously untried move, Konami uses ALL of the PlayStation's polygonal abilities on the characters at 30fps. What this means for you is pancake-flat backgrounds but characters with such detail

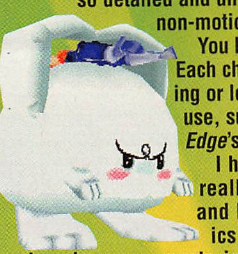








as individual fingers, locks of hair, necklaces, capes, and clothing. *LL* has the best implementation of anime-style characters in a 3-D environment I've ever seen... Each character's facial expressions change constantly, the 3-D models are so detailed and un-doll-like as to almost challenge 2-D fighter animation, and the character motion is the greatest non-motion captured movement ever.



You know about the graphics and the gameplay, so now I'll tell you about *LL*'s #1 feature: Story Mode. Each character has a complete, RPG-like story mode, complete with tons of items, which you get by beating or losing to enemies in certain ways. There are over 180 items in the game, and each has a certain use, such as looking at fun staff messages, sketches, animation tests, character profiles, etc. Like *Soul Edge*'s Edge Master Mode, this gives you massive incentive to finish the story mode with each character.

I have to give *Lightning Legend* my highest recommendation, as I had tons of fun with it and I really love the character design. (Moko Moko and Naughty! Too awesome!) Besides graphics many will find distasteful, *Lightning* does have one mysterious flaw: Constant auto-blocking. There are very few attacks in LL that you have to manually block, making it fairly easy and nothing but annoying in versus mode. Ah well. Konami has a great offering for their first 3-D fighter... I hope they consider releasing it here.

NR

PlayStation

Developer: KCET

Publisher: Konami

Released: 12/20/96







R REVIEW

SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - SONIC SOFTWARE
PUBLISHER - SEGA/JAPAN
FORMAT - CD
OF PLAYERS - 1
DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
AVAILABLE - NOW JPN./ U.S.-?



E. STORM Another E. Storm rant. Is there no end to this madness!?



















Meet your foes face to face!



Here in the US, the Sega Saturn is enjoying less than spectacular popularity among the three next generation gaming consoles. Many attribute this to the hardware itself, due to its supposed lesser FMV and 3D capabilities. A glance back at the not-so-distant past however, reveals the real story. Hardware deficits didn't stop the Genesis which was less of a machine than the SNES in more ways than one. What the Genesis had was strong 3rd party support, and a plethora of titles from their parent, Sega of Japan. Of course these two things work hand in hand. Hit titles from the manufacturer lead to more hardware sales and thusly 3rd party support begins to swell. It's all about software; always has been, always will. I'm not implying the Saturn is hitless, Virtua Fighter, and Cop, as well as Rally and a host of others have done Sega proud. But the effort to get the imports over here in an acceptable time frame has dwindled substantially since those Genesis days and herein lies the problem.

Monsters have been awakened... sharpen your blade!



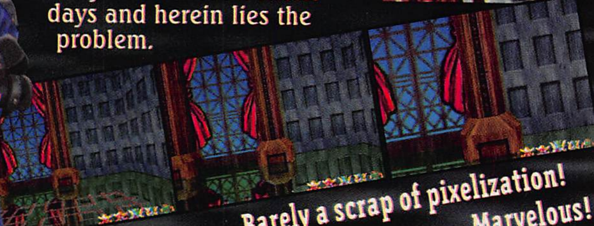












Barely a scrap of pixelization! Marvelous!

















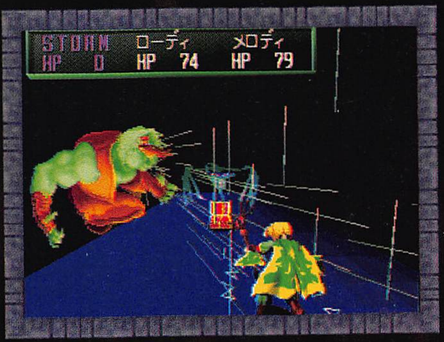
Case in point, Shining the Holy Ark, sequel to the renowned Genesis game Shining in the Darkness, has not only not begun the localization process but as of press time has not even been considered for release by SOA. It's bad enough Phantasy Star isn't even being considered.

Now, hot RPG number two is getting the cold shoulder as well. A subscription to the import Saturn books Sega needs... desperately. All the while the PlayStation has begun an all-out assault on the now-hot category (Suikoden won the top spot in a recent EB top 10 and continues to hold firm in the top 5) with Suikoden, Persona













and Beyond the Beyond already available and Tale of the Sun, Carnage Heart, Wild Arms, Vandal Hearts, and the king of all RPGs, Final Fantasy VII, all on the way. Not to mention the recent signing of Enix, who have signed on exclusively with Sony. With Square and Enix they've won in Japan, hands down. Those two companies enjoy god-like status overseas. The PS will be the top-selling console for years to come in Japan. America however is a different story. The battle rages on here, but to win you must support all genres. At present, 3 great SS RPGs lay in wait overseas: Tengai Makyo-The Apocalypse 4, Airs Adventure, and Shining. Had the localization process started when these went Beta, we'd be looking forward to all three right now. Add to those a full blown 32-bit Sonic (if one is planned) and you've got the beginnings of the

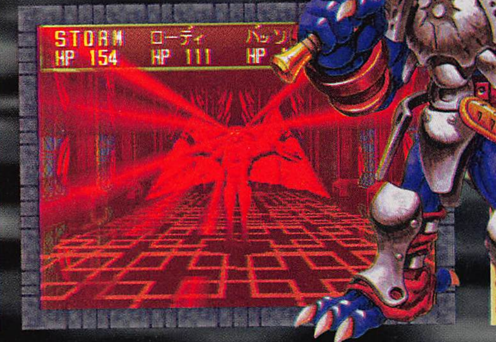
















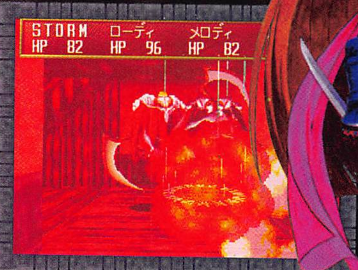




The small kingdom of Entrich lies in peril. Greed has brought them to their knees. Arthur, Forte and Melody are their only hope...









Sega of old. The Sega gamer need only be supported and he will stick like glue. I know, because I'm one of them. I started playing seriously on the NES but the Genesis made me a gamer for life, with, for the most part, Japanese software. That said, on with the review!

Shining the Holy Ark takes 3D Role Playing into a whole new realm, as only Sonic Software Planning can. Hardware aside, it's the way these guys make games, the way they feel, that cannot be duplicated. By taking the player both inside and out to do battle among forests, snow covered peaks, haunted mansions, Egyptian corridors, and murky sewers, the monotony of dungeon-esque gaming is thwarted. And by creating realistic 3D townscapes where you enter into each dwelling and watch events unfold, they've made the Role Playing aspects as fun as the fighting. Also first rate is SSP's icon display system. From four central icons you'll buy, sell, equip, trade, toggle game functions, and do battle. The system is linked and layered and the most functional I've ever used. The fighting itself in StHA, is phenomenal. Your character's perspective is first person while your comrades, realistically, are second. The magic spells are a sight indeed and the char-



Kingdoms and villages so real, it's like being there!

























acters able to cast them can store ample supplies of MP. The dungeons and mazes in Shining are (believe it or not) even longer than Shining in the Darkness. This is compounded by the on-screen map which you can call up at any time. Mazes take anywhere from an hour to over 4 to complete, depending on your skill level, and are laced with mysteries and puzzles that will perplex and amaze you. Simple walk-and-hack gameplay this is not. StHA is pure RPG goodness. In typical SSP form the soundtrack backs up the drama and then some. The music in Shining is excellent, easily worth purchasing if you're into game music from Japan.

So, you see, this is why I'm so peeved that a US release is not even being considered at this point. On a positive note however, if history repeats itself, sooner or later Sega will stumble across Shining and begin the localization. So, while it may be late in coming, you probably will see it in the future. Knowing almost no Japanese, I got stuck only once, so, for those of you who play import RPGs this one is very do-able. Whether you play it now or wait, StHA is the best Saturn RPG to date. I only hope there's more where this came from. ***E***

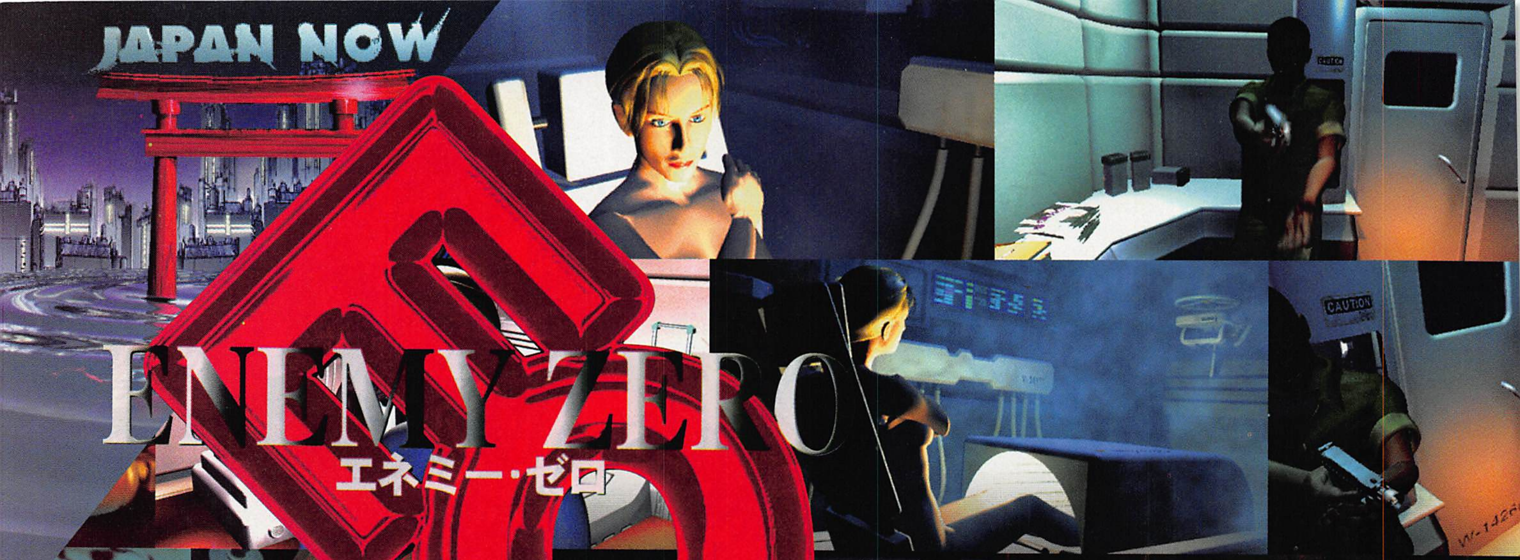












ENEMY ZERO
エネミー・ゼロ

I'm almost a little disappointed that *Enemy Zero* finally did come out. I miss the drama, the soap opera theatrics: The President of Warp suddenly becoming a game industry God for heading up a start-up that had only ever generated one hit game (*D*), the industry-shaking stab at Sony as Warp announced that their long-awaited PlayStation title would be a Saturn exclusive (at Sony's own PlayStation Expo!), the constant interviews and press conferences, and even the much-hyped $2,000 special version of *E0* which was delivered to the purchasers' homes by Writer/Director/Producer/Musician/President Kenji Eno himself. I doubt any game, save for *Final Fantasy VII*, got as much Japanese press coverage in 1996 as *E0* did. And now it's finally out—Warp's second major release, a game that's been built up for so long there's no way it could ever possibly meet gamers' expectations.

Or can it? *E0* is a spectacular game, a game that takes the well-received premise of *D* and infuses it with everything that title was lacking—challenge, length, action, and an intricate storyline.

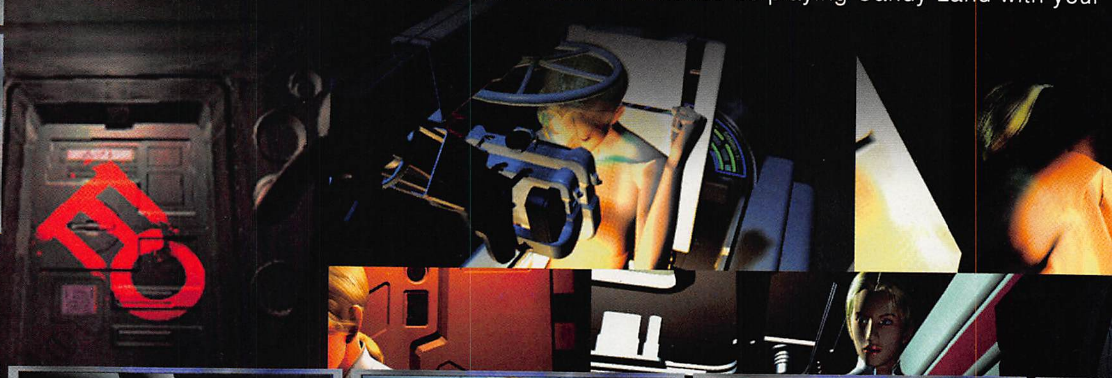
The main character is Laura Lewis (no relation to *D* character Laura Harris—Warp thinks of the Lauras only as being the same "digital actress"), who's just woken up from cold sleep with a bad case of amnesia. She's not sure what exactly her role on the giant spacecraft "Aki" is, but she knows that her fellow crewmen are rapidly being killed off by invisible creatures they refer to as "Enemy Zero."

The storyline is fast-paced and full of plot twists, although just about every single one of them can be easily predicted by those familiar with the *Alien* series of movies. Even when they are predictable, the exceptional quality of direction keeps the level of suspense high. The game plays mostly like *D* did, with a traditional FMV engine that gives you limited freedom as you explore the game's impressive pre-rendered environments.

The twist this time around is that there are also real-time polygon corridor scenes that link the pre-rendered FMV rooms. Although heavily letterboxed like the FMV scenes, these scenes are beautiful, with lots of obstacles, varying textures, and unnerving lighting effects. These scenes are also where the action scenes, some of the game's finest moments, occur.

Anyone expecting a *Doom* rip-off has a little surprise coming. Compared to the infuriatingly tricky corridor scenes in *E0*, *Doom*'s about as intense as playing Candy Land with your





Above: The game's corridor scenes.
Below: The actual TruVideo Saturn FMV.





4-year old niece. Picture this: You're fighting against an enemy that's completely invisible... The only way you can track him is by listening to the high-pitched notes your motion-tracking earpiece generates, his growls, and the terrifying crash of the automatic doors as he gets near them. Now imagine that the only weapon you have is a gun that has to be charged for fully 3-4 seconds before it can get off a single shot. And just to push that disturbing scenario completely over the top, Mr. Eno decided to make sure that no gun in the game can get more than 3 shots off of a full charge.

Even that doesn't do the experience justice. I really can't describe what it's like walking down a corridor, trying to track an enemy on a parallel corridor with only the pitch and tempo of your ear piece to tell you what side of you he's on and how close he is. And then, while you're lying in wait with your last shot of ammo, expecting to kill the enemy you've maneuvered in front of you, you suddenly hear the crash of an automatic door behind you...

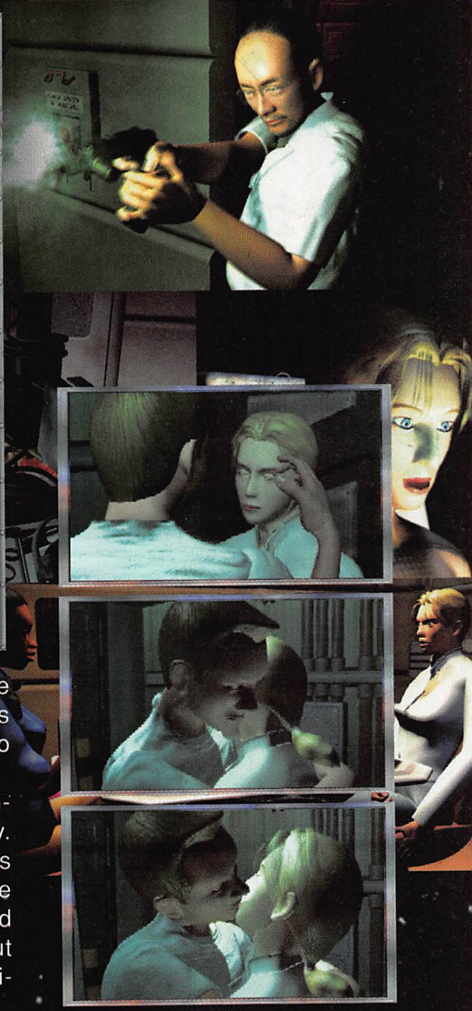
It's aspects like these that make me think that *E0*'s true ancestor isn't so much *D* as it is *Resident Evil*: Both games share the same white-knuckle intensity, not only in the action scenes but in the directorial style and storyline... In fact, In terms of absolutely scaring the crap out of you, I'd have to give the edge to *E0*.

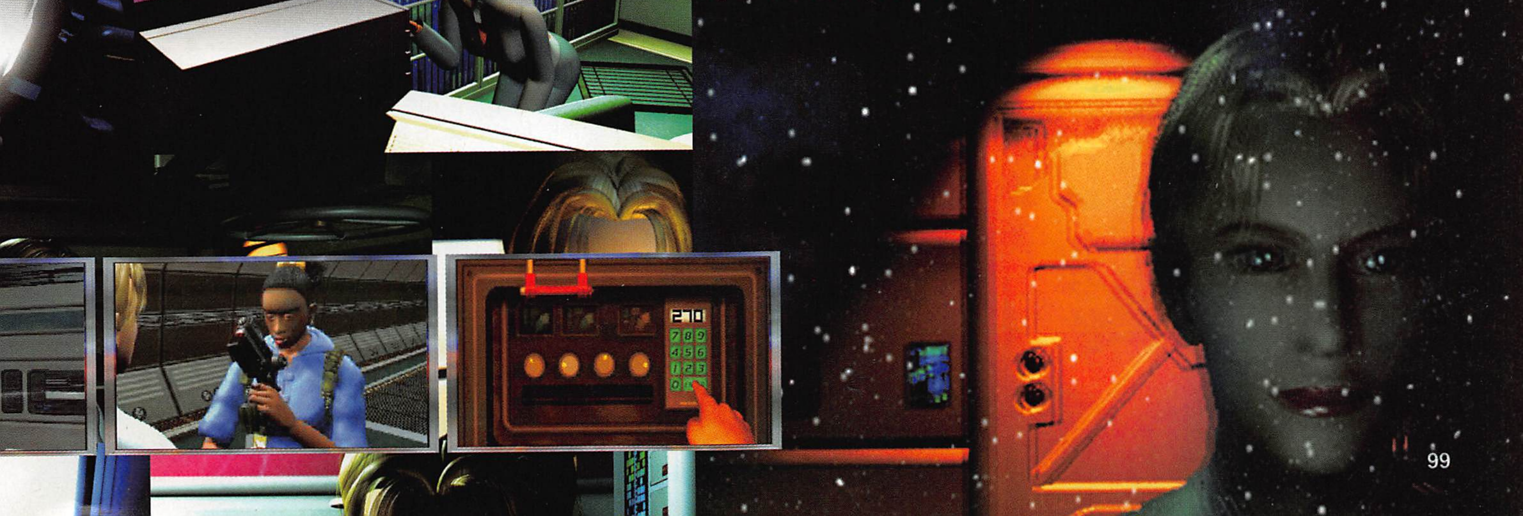
Surprisingly, *E0* is not only long and challenging, but also has a number of non-linear elements. While the storyline only ever proceeds in one direction, there is a great deal of freedom of movement. For example, when you get to disc 2, you have access to an elevator that will take you to 8 different floors that you'll need to thoroughly explore in whatever order you wish. The game might actually be too difficult for some: I enjoy the challenge of having to map the dungeons by hand and fight invisible enemies with an unbearable shortage of ammo, but am a bit troubled by the limited number of times you can save or load. Of course, there is a beginner mode, but even that won't come close to providing a *D*-like walkthrough that some players might be expecting.

Warp could have easily made a ton of money by knocking out a sci-fi version of *D* with pretty graphics and two hours of simplistic play. Instead, they went the distance and made a game that does as much for the interactive movie genre as that classic title did. It's too bad that *E0* was almost overshadowed by the industry soap opera it generated, but you simply can't argue with the quality of the final product. *T*

Developer: Warp
Publisher: Warp
Released: 12/13/96

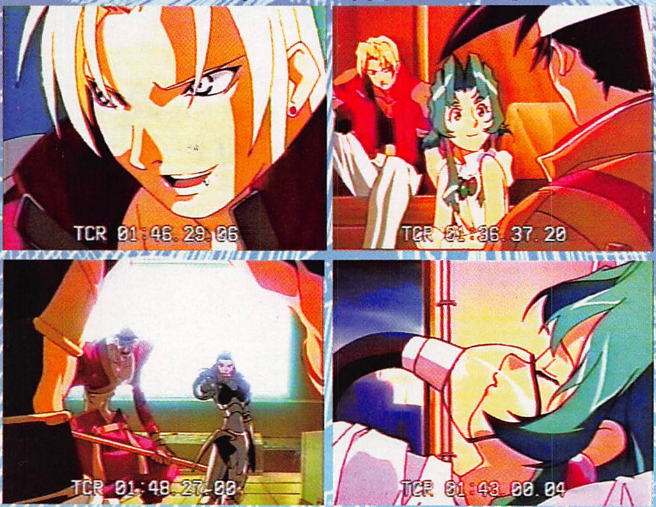
Takuhi





TAKUHI'S ANIME FAN

Hey all! Just a quick note here to let you know that this will be my last installment of Anime Fan. I'm sure it will return soon in someone else's competent hands, but I just wanted to thank all of the readers for the ton of letters I got, and thank all the company reps for all that they've done for me over the last year. Since this is my final column, I figured I'd toss out all the lame stuff and just highlight all of my currently running favorites. I hope you'll give some of these excellent titles a try, and happy anime'ing until we meet again! -Takuhi





I could start by saying that this is the best thing the *Toshinden* series ever brought us, except coming from me that wouldn't mean much. And believe it or not, the *Toshinden* anime actually deserves more than such faint praise.

While certainly not a masterpiece in terms of storyline or animation quality, *Toshinden* is one of the few game-to-anime translation that I can actually approve of, and a much needed lesson for the producers of the currently running *Virtua Fighter* and *Street Fighter II V* series.

For one thing, the many fight scenes are thankfully broken up with only a minimum of storyline (a storyline that's actually pretty good), and are full of satisfying, well-directed action. All of the game's characters appear (the lamer ones appear only briefly... fine with me), and while their signature moves are well-represented, the director didn't let an obsession with accuracy get in the way of the action.

Both episodes are present on this one $19.95 tape, available in both edited and uncut (but still barely PG-13) versions. It's only available in dubbed form, which is unfortunate, but if it's any consolation, the original Japanese actors were, in many cases, even more annoying.

Fans of the series are fortunate to have a well-done anime translation that treats *Toshinden*'s storyline and characters with almost more respect than they deserve. And even non fans like myself can find plenty to enjoy in this enjoyably fast-paced title.



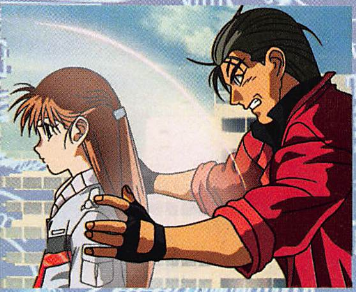






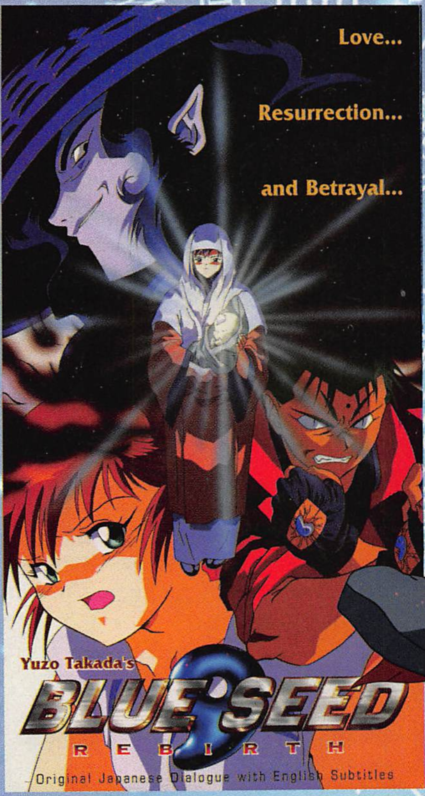














For some reason, AD Vision has abandoned their numbering scheme and retitled this collection of the show's 13th and 14th episodes *Rebirth*. While it's bound to cause some confusion, this move does serve to highlight one of the series more interesting moments: It's right around this area when the series changes its more episodic format in favor of concentrating more on the series' overall storyline.

Blue Seed has always been, in my opinion, a rather awkward mixture of excellent fundamental storyline concepts and uncomfortably juvenile subplots. The strong back story and the excellent Yuzo Takada character designs have always kept things interesting at even the series' weakest points, but the simplistic find-monster-kill-monster storylines and ultra-stereotyped characters of recent episodes have still been a bit trying. Fortunately, however, the series' fascinating main storyline is now being allowed to develop, and the return of Momiji's twin, Kaede, brings the two episodes in *Rebirth* some much appreciated drama and gravity.



I can only hope that *Blue Seed*'s producers continue to take the high road and develop more upon *Blue Seed*'s unique storyline and potentially interesting cast of characters. Until I find out otherwise, it's good to have Blue Seed back.



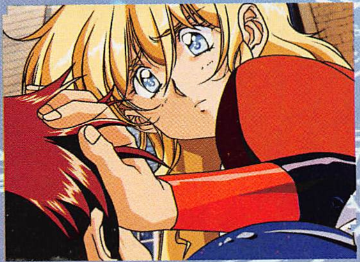
Plastic Little, Satoshi Urushihara's fabulously animated fantasy epic, is finally available in an English dubbed version. While *Plastic Little*'s storyline doesn't live up to the awesome potential of its design and animation, it's still one of the most enjoyable hours of animation available today.

I've been a fan of Urushihara's artwork since the *Langrissa* series of strategy games, and he's in top form in *Plastic Little*, his 2nd major animated effort. *Plastic Little* showcases not only his famous beautiful and incredibly erotic female character designs, but also his skill at creating a lush and beautifully realized pseudo-modern fantasy world.



Plastic Little is full of memorable scenes, but they're slapped together with such a poor sense of continuity that I can only assume that *Plastic Little* was originally intended as a full-length movie that ran out of time or money somewhere in the middle. Ah well, if you can look past the unresolved subplots and undeveloped supporting cast, there's a lot to like.

The dubbing is pretty good, but the supporting cast tends to go a bit overboard on the accents... Especially Doctor May—I keep wanting to yell, "Don't trust her! That's Radinov from Gunsmith Cats!" to her patients. But regardless of its faults, the animation quality and character design make Plastic Little an excellent adventure for mature audiences.







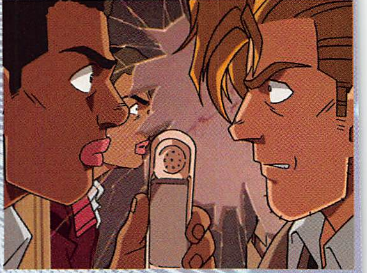




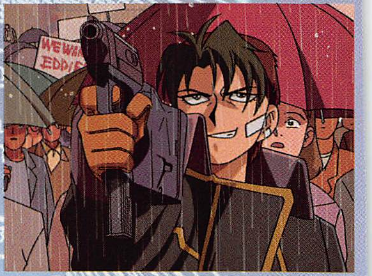












And now, the bad news: *Gunsmith Cats* is over. Yep, VAP only ever made three of these masterpieces, and although the Kenichi Sonoda manga is still running, I haven't heard of any plans to do any more OAVs.

While I'm afraid I must report that *Gunsmith Cats 3* is the worst of the trilogy, you have to keep in mind that *Gunsmith Cats* at its worst is still far better than 99% of the anime out there at its best... While less exciting than its predecessors, *Gunsmith 3* is still a superbly-directed episode that'll make you want to rewind it and just watch it again the second its over.

The problem this time around is that the writers, evidently suddenly realizing that the series is coming to an end, hastily try to add a far-reaching conspiracy plot to explain the events of the last two episodes. This is all well and good, but every minute spent on the plot is one less minute of gun and explosive play between our beloved heroines Rally and May, and their cunning adversary, returned hitma... er, hitperson, Radinov. This leaves only a few precious minutes of action, but as you'd expect from *Gunsmith Cats*, they're still well worth the price of admission... I know I'm not the only one who'll miss this superb series.

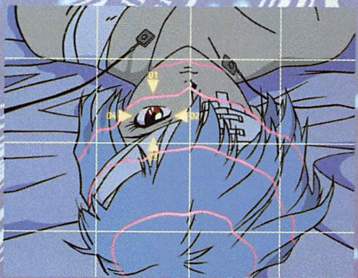


But hey, if anything can fill the void left by the conclusion of *Gunsmith Cats*, it's *Evangelion*. I know I've already printed a Unabomber-sized missive about how spectacular this series is, but I can't allow myself to leave Anime Fan behind without one last plug for my most favorite anime of them all. And hey, I even stole a piece of *Evangelion* artwork for the background to this special, limited edition Anime Fan.

For those who have taken the plunge, I can only promise that as good as it is now, it's only going to get a lot better a few more tapes from now. The creativity and ingenuity in the latter half of this series represents everything I love about anime. And for that reason, I can heartily recommend *Evangelion* to even the most jaded of anime fans... It just doesn't get any better than this. *T*



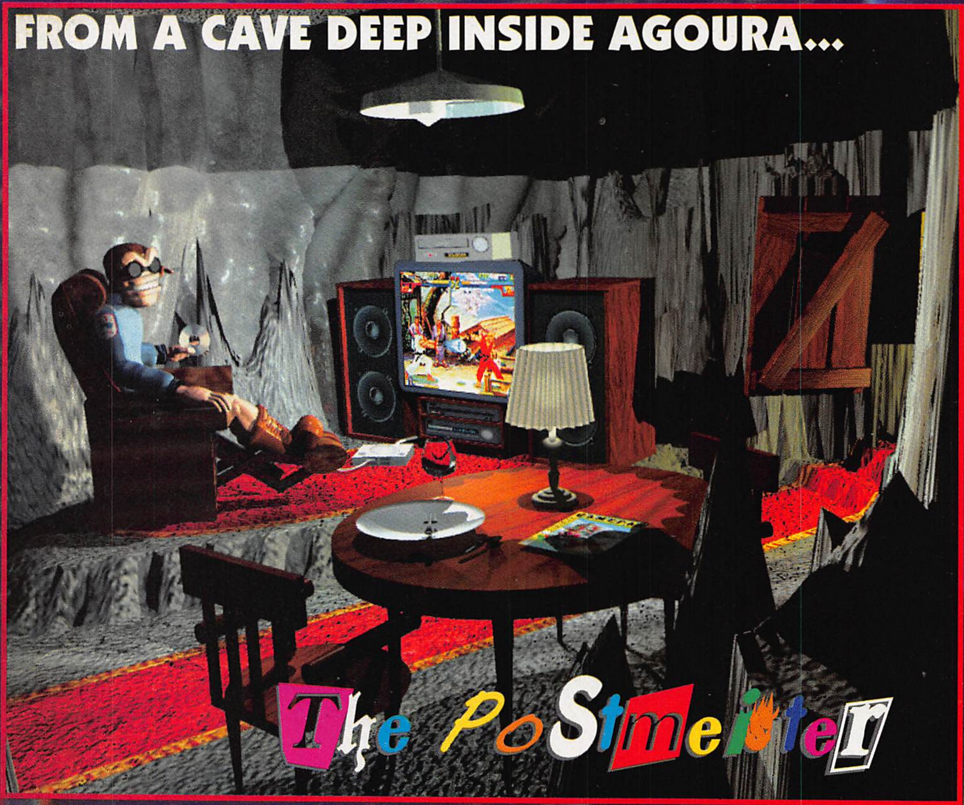









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Dear Posty
I am a diehard *Zelda* fan and I'm afraid. I'm afraid that *Zelda 64* will be entirely 3D and will have completely different gameplay. I just don't think a 3D *Zelda* will work. Why can't they just make it 2D? If it ain't broke, don't fix it. It's not like the Nintendo 64 doesn't have enough 2D power. It obviously does. Just look at *Yoshi's Island 2*!

Oh well, enough of that rant. Here are some questions for you, if you would be so kind as to answer them:
1) Is *Tomb Raider* coming out for N64? *X-Men vs. Street Fighter*? *Cruis'n the World*?
2) What fighting games are coming out on Nintendo 64?
3) What is the big deal with box art? It's not like you're going to frame all your game cases and hang them on your wall.
4) Have you noticed the uncanny resemblance between Orion and the aliens from *Mars Attacks*?
5) What happened to *Evil Lights*? He was my favorite reviewer. *Takuhi* is my favorite now with *Chief Hambleton* close behind.
That's all for now and thank you for listening.
Spunky, the Amazing Bowl of Pasta
Magnolia, DE

Well, Spunky, the industry consensus seems to be that if something isn't "next generation" (meaning 3D, evidently), it won't sell. Personally, I'd love another 2D Zelda, but a 3D one would certainly have its own charms. Shigeru Miyamoto claims that Zelda 64 will have nearly all of its traditional items and play mechanics, but there will be some major changes with the 3D perspective, and evidently a new control scheme that allows you to swing your sword freely... Only time will tell if it Link can adapt to his new world...

1) Tomb Raider probably isn't, but Core is thinking about making the sequel on the N64 (In addition to PS and Saturn, of course). X-Men vs Street Fighter *is a no,* Cruis'n the World *is a maybe.*
2) Well, you have your KI Gold *and* Mortal Kombat*... After that is Hudson's* Dual Heroes, *which will likely be made into a* Power Rangers *game here... Bleah...*
3) What's the big deal with box art? What's the big deal with box art? How can you say such things, Spunky!? Okay, let's take a quick reader poll: How many people took special care to put their Suikoden *face down on the counter when they bought it? Personally, I was too shocked to even do that... I broke down and leveled with the girl behind the counter. "Look, this is a complex adventure about political rebellion and filial piety that's based on a seminal classic of Chinese literature," I said. "Really, it is! Don't give me that look!" I'm sure she and her co-workers are still laughing at that pathetic boy-I-wish-I-was-Boris-Vallejo artwork and the deformed boy who purchased it. And you know why I must endure such shame? Because of you, Spunky! Clearly the so-called "surveys" game companies claim they do consist of calling up Spunky "The Amazing Bowl of Pasta" and asking him if he cares about box art. Sure, it's what's inside that counts, but would you take the Mona Lisa to Frames Plus and ask them for the cheapest one they have? Why not go all the way and just sell the games in plastic sandwich bags? You disappoint me, Spunky!*
4) So that explains where Orion's been for the last nine months...
5) What happened to Evil Lights? Well, one day he loudly announced at work that he "didn't really care about game box art." I came in the next day to find our parking lot mysteriously repaved and no one's seen Evil Lights since. Hmmm...

To The Only Unbiased Gaming Magazine I Can Find in Isolated Illinois,
I write with a puzzled mind seeking enlightenment. These questions are starting to really bother me:
1) Nobody had ever provided me with clear and straightforward answers as to why we are not supposed to play import games according to Sony, Nintendo, and Sega. I realize you couldn't do anything about it, but why do these companies go to such trouble to make Japanese games incompatible with American systems? I... sob... just can't stand it any longer... I WANT MY *DRAGON BALL Z*! Sorry, but it really isn't fair.
2) I realize Nintendo 64 games are hard to come by, but when I was looking for *Wave Race* I called some places and found that the game was selling for up to $90! This is ridiculous, I realize it's hard to find, but why hike the price $25?
3) I realize that the exchange rate between the dollar and the yen is not favorable and they have to be imported across a big ocean, but why do soundtrack CDs (both game and anime) carry prices of $30-$40 a disc? It makes for very few CDs on a limited student's budget. Then again, three disc sets for $65 aren't bad...
4) Any hints at all on *Dragon Ball Z*, *Ranma 1/2*, *MegaMan*, or any other anime-related games for the N64?

Being the second person to buy the Nintendo 64 at my local retailer, I am simply amazed at what has been released. Not only with the capabilities of the hardware, but with the creativity, overwhelming amount of thought put into the games, and most importantly, how *$#% @& fun these games are! If this is foreshadowing what is to come, I will be completely loyal to Nintendo.

I realize you people take all of these proclamations of gratitude and congratulations for granted what with how many you probably receive, but GameFan really is the best magazine on the newsstand, and the best thing is that there is never a shortage of anime!
Eternally perplexed and directionally challenged James "Makoto" White
St Charles, IL

PS: Being an anime fan does not mean I have any interest in *Sailor Moon* and I wish to keep it that way. Miyazaki's works are as cute as I'll watch. I'm sure I'll get all sorts of nasty letters for this.

1) It always seemed so ridiculous to me too... I mean, let's say you buy an import Wave Race*... Nintendo of Japan makes 20 bucks or so, right? Let's say you buy the domestic version... Nintendo of America makes 20 bucks or so, and they mail that to Nintendo of Japan. I know it's an over-simplification, but companies just want control over all of their product... And they don't want us to know what we're missing overseas. There are some*

good legal reasons (if there is such a thing as a "good" legal reason) involving licenses and such, but that's just not good enough for me... Maybe I'm missing something, and a company exec will write in and educate us. Hey, did you hear that the electronics industry has demanded that there be different DVD standards for different parts of the world? That means you can't by Japanese Sailor Moon *(Give in and accept* Sailor Moon, *James, or they'll hunt you down and make you. Believe me, I know) DVDs and play them on your American player. How very, very lame.*
2) At least you didn't get stuck paying $575 for a Tickle-Me-Elmo doll. But hey, it was worth it! I love that thing!
3) Actually, soundtrack CDs are disproportionately expensive even in Japan. While the prices of games are roughly equivalent at current exchange rates (most CD games in Japan are between $55 and $70 dollars), Japan music CDs are still nearly twice the cost they are here. There's actually a reason for this: Unlike video games, the music industry completely controls the pricing of their products; music stores are not allowed to sell CDs for less than their retail price, which is decided by its record label, and printed right on the CD case itself. The Japanese government is currently considering breaking this monopoly, but the music industry claims that if they didn't make ludicrously high profits off of CDs, they'd no longer be able to offer fringe products, such as traditional Japanese music and (ulp) game and anime soundtracks. But I think they just want to keep making $10-15 a pop.
4) Well, there's Doraemon! *Probably not what you had in mind.*
Thanks for the kind words and the thought provoking letter!

Dear Posty,
I'm a game crazy, anime-watching, GameFan-worshipping, *SF* loving, 2D-craving freak, bent on world domination (well, maybe not world domination) who has kindly taken the time to notice your glory and write to you.
1) May I PLEASE have Jen Seng's address? I'll do anything, clean your cave, give you waffle chips, do my homework! After all, we *SF* fans gotta stick together. (Keep in mind that I did say "Please.")
2) What ever happened to Core's *Ninja*?
3) *Sakura Wars*? Here? I know that the chance is slim but please tell me who to write to so I can persuade them. I'm sure if it does well, they'll start releasing games like *Arc the Lad* and *Dragon Quest*.
4) Can anyone loan me $3000? I was thinking of buying a couple of games, but I seem to be a little short. I'll pay you back, I don't need TWO legs!
5) I've liked *Metroid* since day one (that is, until it refused to work and I had to throw it against my wall), and when Other Stuff was kind enough to suggest that it may join the 64-bit world, I went crazy. Any word on that?
6) Capcom, I love you, and it breaks my heart to say this but... what the hell is wrong with you? Not only do you release this polygon monstrosity (it was sinful just thinking about it) but the little bit of hand-drawn art you put into *Street Fighter EX* sucks! *Star Gladiator* was an excellent game, but why *SF*...?
Um, I guess I'm done. Oh yeah, I hope that our Preeminent Primate Postmaster of the Post Office will be kind enough to grant my request and give me Jen's address. Okay you nuts at GameFan, keep making the best damn magazine in the universe... I love you, man! (Snuff).
Shoryureppa!
Ken Diaz
Miami Springs, FL

Sorry, but to everyone who wrote in requesting Jen's address, or requesting we relay their addresses to her, the answer is, unfortunately, no. Once again I must question whether the words "good" and "legal reason" ever seem appropriate together, but that's the official answer from the higher-ups...
2) Chief Hambleton sez, "Isometric polygon joy. Think Shinobi *in 3D. There's an interview with the Ninja team in the next issue of GameFan!"*
3) Sorry Ken, but it seems as though you're never going to see any of those games here.
4) Um...
5) Yeah, what's up with that? Nintendo's making 64-bit versions of GameBoy games like Wave Race, *but they don't make a 64-bit* Metroid!? *I bet it's in the works.*
6) Even Capcom needs a little bit of that tough love once in a while, I guess. But don't worry, beautifully hand-drawn SFIII *is coming FOR YOU.*

Dear Posty,
I've played that *Final Fantasy* demo and I got to tell you, the SquareSoft staff has God stashed away over there. This is just the demo? Posty, please answer these questions as best you can:
1) *Will FFVII* music be streamed? (Please say no...)
2) Will a Sasquatch be in this one?
3) Will the box art be Americanized?
4) Why was Bullet's name changed?
Thank you,
Lumigata Bethleem
Dallas, TX

1) All of FFVII's actual in-game music will be PCM, and all of the scored music will be streamed with the FMV. If what you mean is "Can I listen to the soundtrack on a CD player," the answer is, unfortunately, no. A 4-disc (gulp) soundtrack will be sold separately.
2) You mean Umaro? Probably not, but I bet Gogo will, since he was in Final Fantasy V, *too, as a character class.*
3) The Japanese box art is just the Final Fantasy VII *logo on a white background. I hope Sony's bold enough to use that here, too.*
4) Bullet and Barret are both acceptable translations of the character's Japanese name. We guessed Bullet, based on the fact that he has a gun on his arm, but the translation team thought otherwise.

Dear Postmeister,
Help! I may not connect with everyone here, but I need to know! Am I the only one or do other people want to see *Phantasy Star V* on the Saturn? I know more people own PlayStations and care about *FFVII*, but my heart aches for a 32-bit *Phantasy Star*.
I've sent Sega two letters in the past year demanding *PS* Saturn, but I've gotten the same "Dear Sega Gamer... we passed on your idea to R&D." What is that? Maybe we need to start a massive write-in to get Sega's attention. I've nothing against Sony and Square and even though *PS* isn't the most revolutionary in terms of interface, battle engine, etc, it has been one of the best (at least 1, 2, and 4, minus the cheesy dialogue on part 4) ways to pass the time ever.
Sega, give us *PSV*! I want the classic pseudo-medieval words back! I want first person dungeons back! Yes, we have fought Dark Force many times, but there is so much you can still do with the storyline (time travel to various times from parts 1 & 2, or something).
Saturn has *Lunar* coming, but Sega, you need your definitive RPG on the Saturn. Fellow gamers hear my plea! Write in to Sega! We need the *PS* legend to continue. We can't have *FFVII* and Sega seems to forget good titles (*Kenseiden*, *Golvellius*, etc). But how dare they forget *PS*. If Sega won't give us *PS*, than we (at least I will) should send a message and stick with *FFVII* & PlayStation as RPG game of choice. Unleash the hounds and let the stationary flow into Redwood City.
An Unfortunately Dejected Sega Fan,
Patrick O'Gorman
Watertown, WI

Phantasy Star *is thoroughly a Sega of Japan series, so I doubt SOA has too much to do with it... But why hasn't a Saturn PS game been announced!? It just doesn't make sense... We had heard one was in development,* Phantasy Earth *was on the release lists since day 1 of Saturn... Did it get cancelled? Or was it just a tentative title for the dreadful strategy game that would become* TerraPhantastica? *Ah, it hurts me to see Sega use that trademark "Ph" in a non-*Phantasy Star *game, and especially as awful of a game as that...*
Phantasy Star *doesn't have a big following in Japan, but it has a strong cult following, and there have been a few exceptional* Phantasy Star *memorabilia books released in the last year or so. One of them had interviews with the developers and it really did sound like they were making a PSV... There were even sketches of the son of PSIV's Rudy and Fals (I shall not disgrace them by mentioning their hideous American names). But I'm starting to fear that it may never be...*

Write to me or I'll run for President!

The Postmeister
5137 Clareton Dr. Suite 210
Agoura Hills, CA 91301

OTHER STUFF

Exclusive Nintendo 64 Update—Its About Time!
Let's begin with the 64DD (in Japan). According to sources at Nintendo of Japan, the date to watch is Sunday, July 20th (though not official) with a retail price in the neighborhood of $149.99. *Zelda 64*, which may be released on the same day, will retail for under $50.00. Games should hover between $35 & $50. The official US unveiling of the 64DD and *Zelda 64* will be at the upcoming June E3 in Atlanta along with *Mother 3*, *Ultra Donkey Kong 64* (also 64DD) and *F-Zero 64*, which may or may not end up being a 64DD game. Another big announcement is *Stunt Race 64*, which has now officially begun development for the 64DD. No release date is available.

Updated N64 Release Date List For the US and Japan

America:	
Mario Kart 64	Feb. 14th
GoldenEye	Mar. 24th
Blast Corps	Mar./Apr.
Ken Griffey Jr. 64	Apr./May.
Kirby's Air Ride (name will change)	May/June
StarFox 64	May/June
Turok: Dinosaur Hunter	Mar. 2nd
Doom 64	Mar. 25th
FIFA 64	Winter
Mission: Impossible	Spring
Lamborghini 64	Summer
Clay Fighter Extreme	May
Dark Rift	Spring
WCW Wrestling	Fall
RoboTech: Crystal Dreams	Spring
Hexen	Summer
Quake	Fall
Duke Nukem 3D	Oct.
F-Zero 64	Fall
Yoshi's Island 64	Nov/Dec
Donkey Kong 64	Fall
Zelda 64	Oct.
Unknown-America:	
Battle Sports 2	3DO
Crazy Cars	Titus
Superman Animation	Titus
Jungle Bots	Playmates
Actua Golf	Interplay
Raze	Interplay
Ascension	Ocean
Deadly Honor	Tec Magic
Rotor Gunners	Tec Magic
Mace: The Dark Age	Williams
Pod	Ubi Soft
Ed	Ubi Soft
Japan:	
Powerful Pro Baseball 4	Feb.
Blast Corps	Mar.
J League Live 64	Mar.
The Mahjongg 64	Mar.
Doraemon	Mar.
Turok: Dinosaur Hunter	Mar.
Rev Limit	Mar.
Blade and Barrel	Mar.
Wild Choppers	Mar.
StarFox 64	Apr.
The 64 Sumo	May
Sonic Wings 64	May
Morita Shogi	May
Multi Racing Championship	May
Star Wars	June/July
Chameleon Twist	Nov.
Cavalry Battle 3000	Nov.
Goemon 5	Summer
Dual Heroes	Summer
Hexen	Summer
Mission: Impossible	Summer
RoboTech	Summer
3D Fighting	Summer
GO GO Trouble Makers	Summer
Unknown-Japan:	
F-Zero 64	
Yoshi's Island 64	
Bomberman 64	
Kirby's Air Ride	

M2 Gets Official Name, But Still 1 Year Away .
Our foreign correspondent tells us that the official name for the M2 in Japan is now the "M2 Station." Apparently the M2S will be unveiled this year in Japan along with an unspecified number of titles already in development, including *D2* and and a conversion of Konami's new coin-op *GTI Club*. *GTI Club* is Konami's first 64-bit arcade racer which displays over 1 million polygons per second, making it an ideal showcase for the M2's power. It will be released to coincide with the launch of the M2 which is currently scheduled for Spring of 1998 in Japan. Known third parties so far include: Konami, Warp, Studio 3DO and Electronic Arts. Word also reaches us that the M2 Station will not use a standard CD drive as previously announced, but will instead feature DVD (Digital Video Disc) technology.

Capcom's Future Line-Up: *The Next Generation?*
Street Fighter vs Dark Stalkers is rumored to be nearly 50% complete, and *Street Fighter vs Marvel Super Heroes* should debut sometime next year. Not many details I'm afraid.

Saturn Gets *Quake* and *Duke Nukem 3D*.
Well, it's official. *Quake* is on its way to the Saturn. It's rumored that the conversion is being handled by the same people who did Quake and Doom for the Mac, so expectations are understandably high. *Duke Nukem* 3D is also Saturn bound, courtesy of the programming lords at Lobotomy (creators of *PowerSlave*). The conversion will use a modified version of the *PowerSlave* engine, and will definitely include a Net-Link mode, like *Quake*. Lobotomy aims to have the game wrapped by May.

Saturn *Manx TT* Shaping Up
Recently, one of our sources managed to catch a glimpse of the Saturn version of *Manx TT*. The game is not hi-res as previously announced, but it is running at 30 fps with a phenomenal amount of trackside detail. Apparently the analog controller works brilliantly with the game. Expect a full preview next issue.

Capcom's Power Trio...
Capcom has confirmed a *SF2* compilation disc including *Street Fighter 2 Turbo*, *Super Street Fighter 2* and *Super Street Fighter 2 Turbo* all on one CD. The game has been tentatively titled *Street Fighter Collection* and will be released for both Saturn and the PlayStation in the US on June 15th.

***Tekken 3* To Hit PS Later This Year in Japan.**
Namco is set to release the *Tekken 3* coin-op in March all across America. The home version of the game will be released on the PlayStation in Japan later this year, with a hardware upgrade similar to the PC 3D accelerator card. Rumor has it the US version may have a simultaneous release; however, traditionally the trip takes 3-6 months.

Final Round...
- This new column is just basically last minute non-stop info! So let's get on with it... *WarZard* is coming to Saturn and maybe the PlayStation in the 4th quarter (Japan and US). We know the Saturn version will come with a RAM cartridge, and it's possible the PS version could do the same.
- *San Francisco Rush* is being converted to the N64 along with *Cruis'n The World*. both titles should be released in the 4th quarter of this year.
- Virgin's rumored N64 version of *Command and Conquer* (by Westwood Studios), has not yet begun, but they do have N64 development systems.
- Both *Ghouls 'n Ghosts* and *MegaMan* are rumored to be in development for the N64, but Capcom has asked we wait until the E3 for the full scoop du jour.
- Konami will be bringing their new N64 game, *Goemon 5* (*Legend of the Mystical Ninja*) stateside this Fall. Konami also has *Castlevania 3D* in development for the N64, which should be publicly announced at the E3 with a 4th quarter release date.

The Ultimate Arcade
GameWorks, the new ultra-arcade from DreamWorks SKG, MCA, and Sega, is set to debut this March in Seattle. Be prepared for 50,000 square feet of gaming nirvana. Gamers will be able to find the latest Model 3 games from Sega along with eight player linked-up cabinets along with original games like the seven story tall Vertical Reality. This sends four players up a twenty four-foot projection screen shooting enemies *Virtua Cop* style. There will also be a rock climbing attraction where players climb their way to the top in a race against other competitors as visual and audible cues guide them along their way. Also, cameras embedded into some games will project high scorers' faces onto a huge screen while little spots shine down on the player, basking them in a heavenly glow. Quite the ego booster. You will also find high-end internet access and avatar-based chat that will allow players to communicate with each other while in GameWorks. There will even be a micro-brewery on hand and a restaurant. Basically, the idea is to make gaming as social an experience as possible and to present the latest in technology as intuitively and transparently as the technology will allow. After Seattle, locations will open in Las Vegas and Ontario, CA., with an expected 100 locations by 2002. Thanks to Jon Snoddy and Melissa Schumer for the behind-the-scenes tour.

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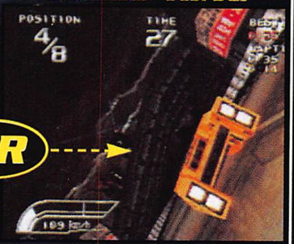
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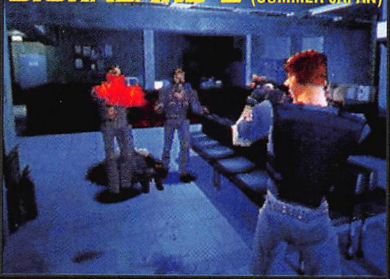
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